



RESEARCH PROTOCOLS

Do Cover Crops Increase the Number of Days Suitable for Field Work?

OBJECTIVES: Determine if the frequency of cover crop use 1) increases the number of days suitable for field work compared with the state averages; and 2) reduces cash crop yield volatility.

WHAT AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR DURING THE TRIAL?

- Identify at least one field on your farm with a history of cover cropping to monitor throughout the growing season.
 - Share field location (town, county, state).
- Provide as much of the following field history as you can dating back to 2016:
 - Falls in which cover crop was seeded.
 - Cash crop planting and harvesting dates.
 - Yield averages of cash crops.
- During the growing season (April–November), complete a weekly survey to evaluate the field conditions of the previous 7 days:
 - Survey will be sent to you weekly on Mondays.
 - Survey will ask you to identify which of the previous 7 days you could perform field work.
 - General questions on the survey:
 - During the past 7 days, what field activities were you trying to achieve?
 - On which days could you have performed these activities?
 - Field conditions you deem suitable for field work is entirely open to your interpretation.
 - No more than 35 weekly surveys will be sent to you during the growing season.
- Trial intake and reflection surveys
 - Before the onset of the trial, an intake survey that documents your willingness to participate and your intentions for participating.
 - At the end of the trial, a reflection survey that documents your overall experience.
 - Your responses to these surveys are appreciated because they help PFI evaluate its on-farm research efforts. Any open-ended responses you share in the surveys may be used in the trial's research report published on the PFI website. In such cases, we will attribute the quote to you.
- Keep in touch with trial contact about trial progress and any questions you have.

WHAT IS PFI RESPONSIBLE FOR?

- The trial contact will monitor progress and provide support when needed.
- PFI will access regional and state days suitable for field work data from weekly crop progress reports published by USDA throughout the year.
- PFI will analyze and interpret results and then publish a research report on the PFI website and potentially in other outlets.

WILL I GET PAID?

- You will be paid \$500 after completing all responsibilities listed above: submitting field info; completing surveys.

TRIAL CONTACT

Roberta Rebesquini, Cropping Systems Research Coordinator
roberta.rebesquini@practicalfarmers.org
(515) 232-5661 ext.1060 (office)