

POPULAR AND USEFUL CHOICES OF COVER CROPS

	Vigor of germination & establishment	Seed cost to plant (1000 sq..ft.)	Time of planting	Over-winter ability	Growth amount	Ease of incorporation	Soil structure improvement	Applic. rate; oz/ 100 sq. ft.	Comments
Annual Ryegrass	***	*	Aug. – Sept.	NO	**	**	***	2	Overall an easy crop to establish
Perennial Ryegrass	**	**	Aug.- mid-Sept.	***	**	*	**	1	Faster establishment than other perennials. Extensive root system
Winter Rye	***	**	Aug – Oct.	***	***	*	**	3	Can grow at low pH and at cool temperatures
Oats	***	**	Aug. – Sept.	NO	*	***	*	4	Requires good soil drainage, but tolerates low pH
Winter Wheat	***	**	Aug. – Oct..	***	***	*	**	3	Requires fertile soil; avoid wet or low pH soil
Sweet Clover	*	*	Summer	***	***	**	**	1	Better with high pH than other clovers
White Clover	*	*(*)	Summer	***	*	***	**	1	Good for low pH soil, treat with inoculant

Tall Fescue	*	***	Spring	***	*	**	**	1	Persistent, may become weed-like
Buckwheat	***	**	Spring	NO	**	***	*	3	Do not allow to mature or reseeding will occur
*** = Relatively high			** = Moderate				* = Relatively low		
<i>Note: Packages of ryegrass usually contain a mixture of annual and perennial types</i>									

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Sources:
 EcoGardening Fact Sheet #9, "Improve Your Soil With Cover Crops." Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY

Dick Raymond, *Garden Way's Joy of Gardening*, copyright 1982 by Garden Way Inc.

Cornell University Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet, "Understanding Frost", from *Home & Garden*, Tompkins County, 1995.