

TRANSITIONING TO ORGANIC PRODUCTION



Cook County Farm Bureau
January 19, 2021



TRANSITIONING PROCESS

- ▶ 36 month time frame
- ▶ No prohibitive products can be used during the 36 month process and beyond
- ▶ If non-organic seed is used, it must be untreated and non-GMO seed
 - Check with your certifier to verify

Select a Certification Agency at the start of your transition.

- Their goal is to assist you along the way rather than conducting enforcement procedures only.

Obtain approval first before
applying any inputs onto your
land.

- ▶ Hire an experienced mentor or another successful organic farmer in your region for guidance.
 - MOSES Mentor Program

- ▶ Prior Land Use (PLU) Affidavit
 - Will need to be approved by your certifier before non-certified organic land is allowed for organic certification.





Date: December 18, 2008
 Samples: 10
 Page: 1
 Report Number: 08-351-0185



Soil Analysis Report
 from Midwest Laboratories
 13611 B St Omaha, NE 68144
 (402) 334-7770

10955 Blackhawk Drive • Blue Mounds, WI 53517
 (608) 437-4994 • FAX (608) 437-4441

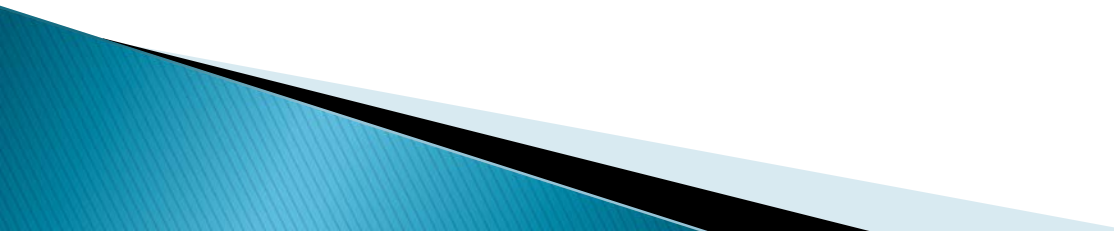
Submitted by:
D SIEGENTHALER

PREPARED FOR: DAVE CAMPBELL																		Micronutrients				
Sample ID	Analysis Date	Organic Matter %	Cation Exchange Capacity CEC meq/100g	Percent Base Saturation (Computed)					Soil pH	Potassium	Magnesium	Calcium	Sodium	Phosphorus			Sulfur	Zinc	Manganese	Iron	Copper	Boron
				% K (+)	% Mg (+)	% Ca (+)	% H (+)	% Na (+)		K (+) ppm	Mg (+) ppm	Ca (+) ppm	Na (+) ppm	P ₁ (WEAK BRAY 1:7) (-) ppm	P ₂ (STRONG BRAY 1:7) (-) ppm	Bicarb (Olsen) (-) ppm	S (ICAP) (-) ppm	Zn (+) ppm	Mn (+) ppm	Fe (+) ppm	Cu (+) ppm	B (-) ppm
1	12-18-08	2.7	17.3	3.9	27.0	68.8		0.3	7.5	260	560	2376	11	44	87	25	12	4.7	4	40	1.4	1.3
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	202-337	249-332	2422-2595		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
2	12-18-08	2.1	11.7	1.6	25.5	66.6	5.8	0.5	6.6	75	358	1558	13	4	54	-	43	2.7	5	23	0.9	0.9
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	137-228	168-225	1638-1755		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
3 EAST	12-18-08	2.7	15.7	1.4	25.5	66.9	5.8	0.4	6.6	85	480	2102	15	5	42	-	53	2.6	4	28	1.4	0.9
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	184-306	226-301	2198-2355		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
3 WEST	12-18-08	2.9	17.9	1.8	26.9	70.9		0.4	7.2	128	577	2537	16	2	39	-	18	2.3	4	28	1.2	1.1
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	209-349	258-344	2506-2685		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
4	12-18-08	2.9	17.6	2.1	30.6	67.0		0.3	6.9	145	647	2361	14	7	34	-	16	2.6	5	41	1.2	1.0
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	206-343	253-338	2464-2640		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
5	12-18-08	3.1	16.7	2.0	28.4	69.3		0.3	7.0	128	569	2313	12	8	44	-	13	2.5	4	34	1.0	0.9
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	195-326	240-321	2338-2505		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
6	12-18-08	3.0	11.5	2.3	20.4	69.2	7.8	0.3	6.5	101	281	1591	8	37	89	-	10	2.8	5	39	0.7	0.7
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	135-224	166-221	1610-1725		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0
7	12-18-08	2.9	13.1	2.2	16.2	67.6	13.7	0.3	6.1	113	254	1771	10	16	37	-	47	2.6	5	37	0.8	0.7
Desired Level				3-5	12-16	70-75			6.8	153-255	189-252	1834-1965		50	100	33	50	5.0	20	20	2.0	2.0

Where to start in the rotation when converting land over to certified organic production

(the following practices assist greatly in reducing weeds)

- Should finances allow, plant multiple cover crops during the transition period.
- If income is needed, focus on forage crops such as alfalfa/grass hay, oats, wheat, or soybeans.
 - Monitor fertility levels closely when raising alfalfa

- Soybeans during the first year of transition have been grown successfully by some farmers
 - Plant beans a little later
 - Use shallow tillage if possible
 - Leave residue near soil surface
 - Avoid corn or other high-input crops if possible
- 

USING COVER CROPS FOR WEED CONTROL AND REDUCED TILLAGE

Intercropping: The Process of Growing
Two or More Crops Together

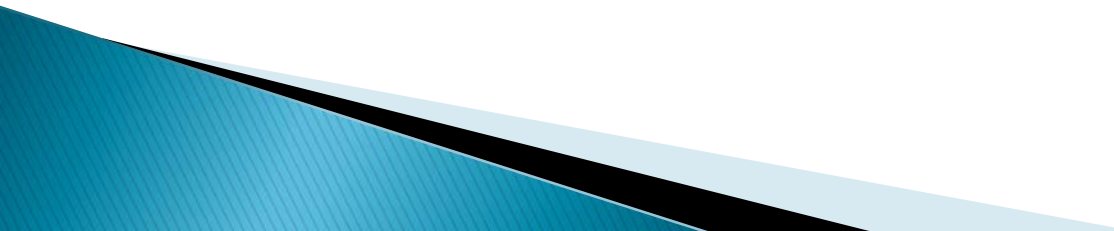
- Medium red clover frost-seeded into winter wheat
 - Alfalfa/grass hay seeded together with oats
- 



Figure 15. Frost seeding clover. 📷 Todd Martin

Benefits of Intercropping

- ▶ Improved Weed Control

Two crops can more effectively use resources (light, water, nutrients), than one type of crop; therefore fewer resources are available for weeds.



Red clover seeded into a crop of winter wheat during late April. Too late to frost-seed.



A close-up look at red clover cover crop shortly after wheat harvest

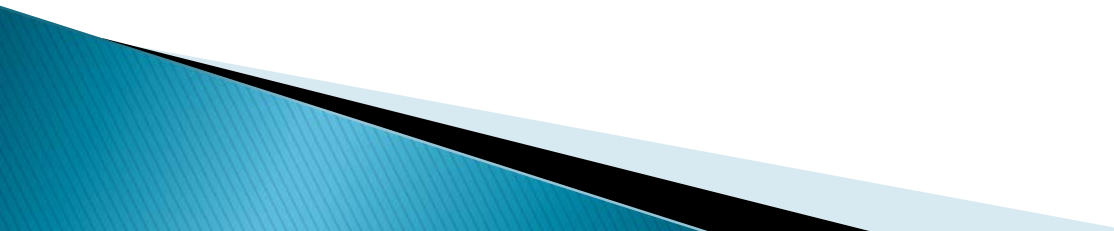


Expensive cover crops are typically drilled in order to save on seed cost.



NOP Definition of a Crop Rotation

The practice of alternating the annual crops grown on a specific field in a planned rotation of sequence, in successive crop years, so that crops of the same species or family are not grown repeatedly without interruption on the same field

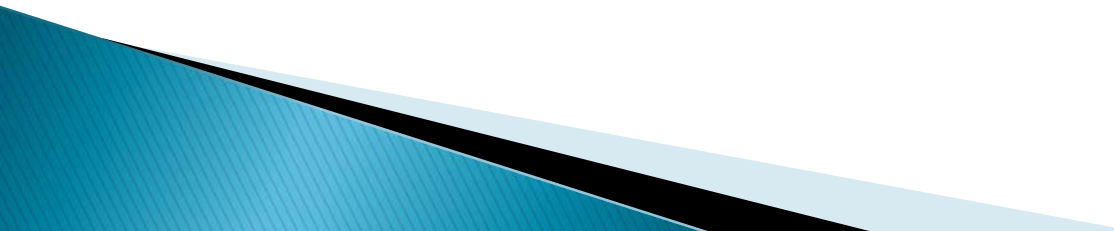


In determining the acceptability of a crop rotation, inspectors will look at all aspects of organic management of the operation, such as:

- ▶ Fertility inputs
- ▶ Cover crops grown
- ▶ Slope of the land
- ▶ Soil conservation practices
- ▶ Diversity of crops grown in order to break weed & pest cycles

Most common rotation used on organic grain (no livestock) farms in the Great Lakes region:

Year # 1	Small Grain – wheat, oats, barley, or spelt with a red clover c. c.
Year # 2	Corn – with a rye c. c.?
Year # 3	Soybeans





Red clover cover crop shortly after oats harvest, along with corn planted after a one-year cash crop of alfalfa



Table 2. Seeding timing of various cover crops.

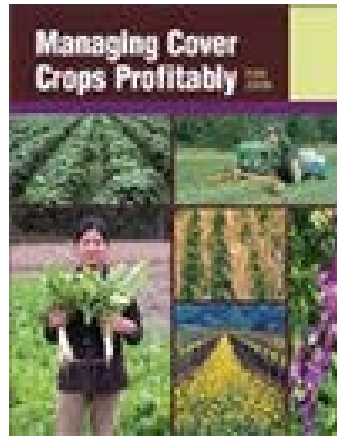
	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
Red clover	←							→
Crimson clover	←					→		
Spring barley		←	→					
Oats		←	→		←	→		
Hairy vetch		←				→		
Chickling vetch	←	→			←	→		
Sweet clover	←							→
Cowpeas			←		→			
Field peas [‡]		←	→		←	→		
Turnips/Forage rape		←	→		←	→		
Oriental mustard		←			→			
Oilseed radish		←	→		←	→		
Buckwheat			←		→			
Cereal rye						←	→	
Winter wheat						←	→	
Winter barley						←	→	
Triticale						←	→	
Annual ryegrass		←	→		←	→		
White clover	←						→	
Sorghum-sudangrass			←		→			

[‡]Also known as Austrian winter peas (black peas), Canadian field peas (spring peas).

Midwest Cover Crops Council

Website –
www.mccc.msu.edu





Managing Cover Crops Profitably 3rd edition

Free download: www.sare.org







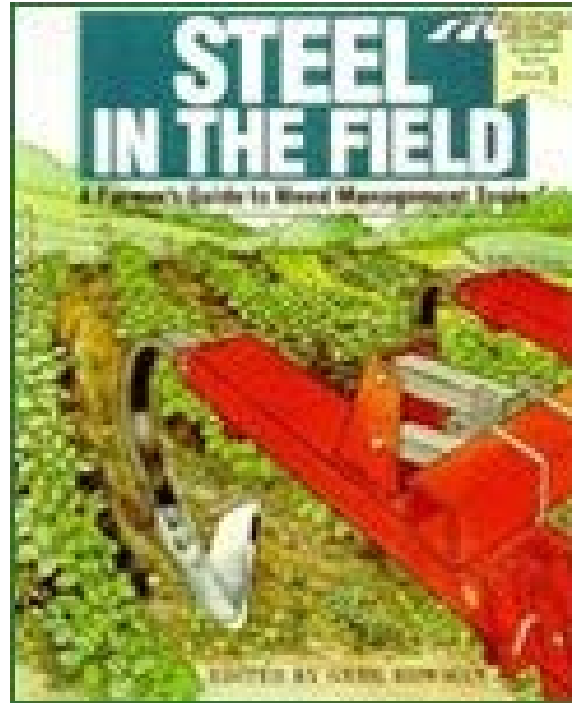




WARNING: If heavy duty and
used in various ways, this tractor may become a projectile when
it is used in a manner not intended by the manufacturer. To
prevent injury or death, never operate this tractor in a manner
not intended by the manufacturer. For more information, see
operator's manual for additional information.







Free download
www.SARE.org

Off-farm seed dispersal

- Purchase weed-free seed only
- Educate neighbors









Importance of crop variety in weed suppression

“A healthy crop is my most important weed
management tool.”

~Jim Monroe

Gratiot County, Michigan



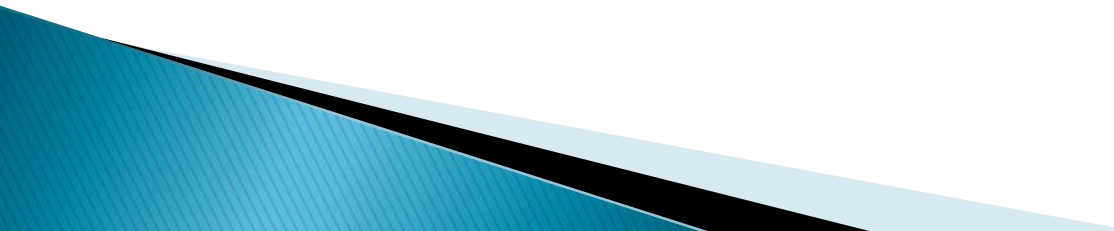


Weed History Worksheet

Field # _____

Problem Weeds

- a. Annuals
- b. Perennials

1. Why are these weeds causing an issue?
 2. What has worked in your attempts to manage this weed?
 3. What has not worked in your attempts to manage this weed?
 4. Other observations
- 

Looking for Assistance to Transition Land to Organic Production?

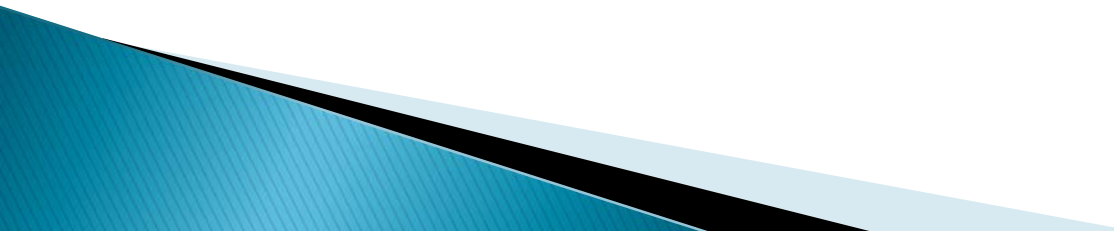
Liberty Prairie Foundation – Nathan Aaberg

- Grayslake IL (Lake County)
- Northeast IL FarmLink
- www.libertyprairie.org

Flanagan State Bank – Gridley IL

- Rich Ritter (Ag Lender)

Compeer Financial – IL, WI, MN

- Paul Dietman (844-426-6733)
- 

Contact Information

Dave Campbell
5N056 Wooley Rd
Maple Park IL 60151
630-365-2019
630-244-5241 cell
LilyLakeOF@aol.com

