

Agronomy "Crib" Notes

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Late Planted Forages, Permanent Cover and Cover Crops

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Most existing **cool season grasses** will keep growing fairly well throughout this season, as long as temperatures during the day are at least in the mid 50's and there is moisture. Once we have a few hard freezes (generally 26 degrees or less) dormancy will kick in and growth will slow down quickly or stop. This is a critical timeframe for most forages and hopefully sufficient (re)growth and rest has occurred to grow adequate roots prior dormancy; this is especially true for new seedings. Green and vigorous topgrowth does not always translate to adequate root growth in order to survive over the winter and take off again in the spring. Whether or not sufficient roots are in place to survive the winter will vary somewhat from year to year which makes the decision of when to stop planting questionable some years.

It is now too late to plant any pastures or hayland. It is also too late to seed critical areas, such as structures or water ways, but if mulched and planted to tall fescue and perennial ryegrass, the area **may** still thrive.

Most seeding dates are based on average successful years and generally should provide good stands as long as sufficient moisture is present. Caution should always be used when seeding past the recommended seeding deadline. All perennial vegetation that was planted outside of the approved timeframes that fails becomes the responsibility of the landowner for re-construction and re-planting to correct the practice's inadequacy. Successful establishment outside of the approved fall timeframe will not be certified by NRCS until the next growing season. For all plantings, the following information must be provided prior to certifying that the practice meets NRCS standards:

- Seed tags documenting % Pure Live Seed and total pounds seeded.
- Documentation showing planting time period, site preparation, planting method, etc.
- Weigh tickets or documents to show that fertilizer was applied as specified, if applicable.
- Documented quantities of erosion control blanket, mulch, or temporary seeding as specified for the practice, if applicable. Erosion control blanket must be installed according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- Documentation of any other required activities have been completed, including "as built" plans, as applicable.

Many **Cover Crop** species have now surpassed the seeding date where success can be expected with the exception of Cereal Rye, Winter Wheat and Winter Triticale. For farmers who purchased a large supply of premixed seed, with a significant portion of the species in it that are now passed the seeding date, the *risk to benefit* will need to be evaluated before planting. Hopefully, at least 50% of the planned stand (plants and species from the FOTG Seeding Calculator) in the mix are still within the approved planting period, and those species will still address the identified resource concerns/desired purpose. If so, it is recommended to increase the seeding rate 10-15% and seed as soon as possible.



Cereal rye has the latest seeding period.

If over half of the planned stand is outside of the approved time periods, and the producer still insists on planting the seed, then the landowner assumes the responsibility/risk if the practice fails due to lack of vegetation establishment. We (NRCS) will issue guidance on procedures to conduct stand evaluations under these circumstances later this month, but planners should warn program participants that payments are at risk as well.

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<http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/agronomy/agronomy.html>