# **TRITICALE**

COVER CROP FACT SHEET FOR IOWA

**Triticale** (*Triticum x Secale*) is a deep-rooted cool-season/winter annual grass that resembles wheat and cereal rye. The plant looks like wheat, but the awns resemble cereal rye. (Photo by Jason Johnson)



# **Identifying Features**

- Blunt and sometimes hairy auricles
- Leaf sheaths and blades are typically hairy
- Medium length ligule

#### **Cultural Traits**

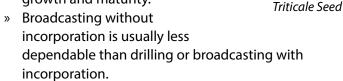
- Cool-season/winter annual grass
- Minimum germination soil temperature: 38° F
- Cold tolerance temperature: -20° F (W) 20° F (S)
- Seeding date: Mid August to Late October\* (F)\*\*\*
- Seeding date: Late March to Late April\* (S)\*\*\*

# **Planting Information\***

- Drill at 34 11/2 inches (45 lbs./acre PLS\*\*)
- **Broadcast** (50 lbs./acre PLS)
- Aerial (55 lbs./acre PLS)

#### Additional planting information:

- » ~13,000 seeds/lb. (1 bushel = 50 pounds)
- Increase seeding rate when planting on slopes or using triticale for forage/grazing.
- When interseeding triticale, time seeding to match appropriate growth and maturity.









Cover crop grass growth comparison

# C:N (Carbon:Nitrogen) Ratios

» Triticale 20:1



<sup>\*</sup> Planting information from Midwest Cover Crop Council (midwestcovercrops.org). Refer to local NRCS office recommendations (lowa Field Office Technical Guide, Section 4, 340 Cover Crop) for seeding dates and rates pertinent to location specific financial assistance program requirements.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Pure Live Seed

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>W=Winter S=Spring F=Fall

### TRITICALE COVER CROP FACT SHEET





Triticale is part of this 12-species cover crop mix. (Brandon O'Connor)

#### **Performance**

Dry matter = 2,000 - 5,000 lbs./acre per year (Biomass quantity is dependent on planting and termination dates and precipitation.)

**Performance Ratings** Good » Cash crop interseed (early vegetative) Cash crop overseed (late seed fill) Excellent Grazing quality Excellent » Mechanical forage harvest Excellent » Nitrogen fixer NA Excellent » Nitrogen scavenger » Weed suppression Very good Good » Compaction fighter » Erosion control Excellent » Lasting residue Excellent » Quick grower Very good Drought tolerance Good Low fertility tolerance Very good Shade tolerance Good

## green bridge or nitrogen tie-up are a concern. For crop insurance compliance, follow NRCS cover crop termination guidelines.

Early season nitrogen applications can help reduce the effects of nitrogen tie-up by the cover crops.



### **Additional Considerations**

- Triticale could increase the risk of black cutworm and armyworm; risk of green bridge increasing pythium seedling disease; and is a host for penetrans root lesion nematode.
- » Time cover crop termination based on goals and experience level. To reduce potential negative impacts on cash crops, consider terminating earlier in the season when conditions are dry or when

This fact sheet is a collaborative effort of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach to provide cover crop options and information for lowa landowners.