

Agronomy tips for growing winter cereals

PLANNING

- + Planning is crucial to fall seeded cereal success.
- + Source your seed/fertilizer early.
- + Logistics planning helps to minimize down-time when switching from seeding to harvest modes
- + Plan on seeding when you may not be able to harvest your spring crops.

FIELD SELECTION

- + Manage diseases/insects by **not** planting into fields with cereal and or grassy weed species that are still green or growing.
- + Plant into standing crop stubble preferably from a non-cereal crop such as canola.

CROP NUTRITION

- + High-yielding crops require nutrients! The four 4 fertilizer stewardship principals are connected with fertilizer efficiency. Wasting fertilizer = wasting money.
- + Many farmers will put starter fertilizer in the row with at least 30% of expected requirements as a side band of stabilized product. A top dress is followed up in spring as soon as conditions are conducive for N application (follow 4 R's).
- + Rye tends to start growing earlier than winter wheat, and many need nutrients as soon as you can get on the field.

CROP & VARIETY SELECTION

- + Winter cereals include winter wheat, fall rye and winter triticale. These crops have a wide selection of varieties that can be grown for different purposes. It is a good idea to know your marketplace before selecting the crop and variety.
- + Be mindful of varietal attributes such as days to maturity, winter hardiness and straw strength. Depending on your situation, any one of these traits can become most important.

WHEN TO SEED

- + Select a seeding date that will allow the plant to germinate and develop into a compact seedling that is approximately 3-4 leaves, and a tiller.
- + Larger or smaller plants can be more susceptible to winter kill.
- + Note your crop insurance seeding deadlines as a guide.

SEEDING TIPS

- + Use a seed treatment.
- + Plant about 1 inch (2.5 cm) deep.
- + Avoid putting excess N with the seed (toxicity).
- + Use a stabilized nutrient product.
- + Seed winter wheat at least 300 plants/m².
- + Consult your hybrid fall rye seed supplier for prescribed seeding rates
- + Sit back, relax and check for winter survivability about 3-4 weeks before you would normally seed a spring-planted crop.