



CASE STUDY

Sime Farm, Stoughton, Wisconsin Grazing Cover Crops-Integrating Livestock into Cash Grain



Objectives

This system allows the Simes to maximize production on winter wheat and soybean acres through double cropping with cover crops for grazing or mechanically harvested forage.



Challenges

Perimeter fencing is needed, the system can be challenging during wet weather



Results

Depending on the year, this system has allowed the Sime's to cut their winter feed needs by 30-50% by extending the grazing season in late fall and early spring.

PLANTING DETAILS

Late Summer: No-till plant diverse cover crop mix into wheat stubble

- seed mix diversity will depend on whether or not the cover crop will be grazed or mechanically harvested

Fall: No-till plant cereal rye into soybean stubble

- recommended seeding rate of 50-75 lbs per acre if grazing in spring
- recommended seeding rate of 100 lbs per acre if mechanically harvesting in spring

Other things to note:

- if wet weather is in the forecast, move grazing animals to permanent pasture or to sacrifice area to avoid compaction
- depending on the farm setup, water may need to be hauled to grazing animals
- grazing earlage and snaplage stalks further extends the grazing season
- interseeding a cover crop into corn can provide additional late fall and early winter grazing opportunities



"You will have a little yield cut, but you're also double cropping and getting two crops out of the same acres. You don't have to sacrifice the whole cash crop by just making feed if you had an alfalfa field or grass field."

KARL SIME

Sime Farm

PRACTICE PHOTOS



Cattle grazing on winter rye
Spring



Multi-species cover crop after wheat
Early Fall



Multi-species cover crop baled
Fall

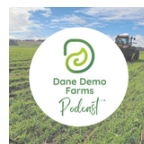


Cattle grazing multi-species cover crop
Fall into Winter



Grazing Interseeded cover crop
Late Fall into Winter

TO LEARN MORE



Listen to the podcast "Grazing Cover Crops with Karl Sime & Marie Raboin "

www.danedemofarmspodcast.buzzsprout.com

About

Dane Demo Farms is a network of farmers that demonstrate and research leading edge conservation practices that improve water quality and soil health throughout Dane County, Wisconsin. Their efforts help reduce nutrients and sediment from entering our waters and build healthy soil.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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<https://demofarms.danecounty.gov/>



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