Dane Demo Farms

CASE STUDY

Endres Berryridge Farms, Waunakee, Wisconsin
No-Till Alfalfa Seeding into Winter Rye

Objectives

Endres Berryridge Farms experimented with no-till alfalfa seeding into winter rye to reduce soil erosion and documented the impacts on both the farm operations and the environment.

Challenges

Storing the ryelage will take extra planning if the farm does not already use this forage.

Results

The Endres' documented decreased herbicide use on newly seeded acres and demonstrated effective erosion control, even during significant spring storm events.

PRACTICE DETAILS

Fall: No-till plant winter rye after corn silage

- Reduce winter rye seeding rate to 20 lbs per acre
- Address any fertility needs
- Roll field if needed to manage stones

Spring: No-till plant alfalfa into winter rye

- Increase alfalfa seeding rate to 20 lbs per acre
- Plant at a slight angle from the rye
- Ensure the depth control is working well on the drill

Late Spring: Cut the winter rye

- Ensure the seedlings are 3" or less in height, adjust mower accordingly
- Time field activities with good soil conditions to prevent seedling damage
- Consider a sulfur application at this time

Early Summer: Take first cutting of alfalfa

- Cutting will include some rye regrowth

"I like the idea of being able to harvest rye, giving us feed for our heifers and youngstock, and then the ability to have, later in the year, good quality alfalfa for the milk cows"

JEFF ENDRES
Endres Berryridge Farms

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PRACTICE PHOTOS

Alfalfa seeded into winter rye
March 4, 2024

Winter rye harvest
May 14, 2024

Alfalfa seedlings after rye harvest
May 14, 2024

Alfalfa and winter rye regrowth
June 12, 2024

Average of 55 plants per sq. ft.
July 3, 2024

TO LEARN MORE

Listen to the podcast "No-Till Alfalfa Seeding into Winter Rye with Jeff Endres"

www.danedemofarmspodcast.buzzsprout.com

This project was conducted independently of Dane Demo Farms and was solely led by Endres Berryridge Farms.

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.
https://demofarms.danecounty.gov/

DANE COUNTY LAND&WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE