

BEST COVER CROP BY SPECIFIC GOAL



The right cover crop for your goal leads to a healthier, more productive garden!

GOAL	BEST COVER CROP(S)	WHY IT WORKS
TO ADD NITROGEN 	**PLANT HAIRY VETCH, CRIMSON CLOVER, OR FIELD PEAS.**  HAIRY VETCH · CRIMSON CLOVER · FIELD PEAS	• Hairy vetch is the highest nitrogen producer. • Crimson clover is the easiest to establish. • Field peas work well in cool, moist climates.
TO ADD ORGANIC MATTER QUICKLY 	**PLANT WINTER RYE.** 	• It produces more biomass per square foot than almost any other cover crop for vegetable gardens. • Combined with hairy vetch for nitrogen, it is the most complete all-purpose cover crop mix available.
TO SUPPRESS WEEDS 	**PLANT BUCKWHEAT IN SUMMER OR WINTER RYE IN FALL.**  BUCKWHEAT · WINTER RYE	• Both create such dense canopy that most weed seeds cannot germinate beneath them.
TO ATTRACT POLLINATORS 	**PLANT PHACELIA, CRIMSON CLOVER, OR BUCKWHEAT.**  PHACELIA · CRIMSON CLOVER · BUCKWHEAT	• All three bloom prolifically and attract enormous numbers of beneficial insects. • Let a small patch go to flower before turning it in.
TO BREAK UP COMPACTED SOIL 	**PLANT TILLAGE RADISH (ALSO CALLED DAIKON RADISH).** 	• Its deep taproot penetrates hardpan and compacted layers that other cover crops cannot reach. • When the root decomposes it leaves channels that improve drainage and aeration deep in the soil profile.
FOR EASY SPRING CLEANUP 	**PLANT OATS.** 	• Oats die in cold winters and leave a soft mulch you can plant right through. • No digging or turning needed in spring.