

Aerial Cover Crop Seeding

Taking soil health to new heights.



What's a cover crop and how does it help?

A cover crop is a conservation practice where grasses or legumes are planted to keep the soil covered in the fall, winter and spring. Keeping plants growing on the surface of the ground improves soil health.

In New England, applying a cover crop after harvest can be too late in the season for it to establish well enough to provide full benefits.

By inter-seeding rye aerially into a crop such as corn, the cover crop is already established when the corn is harvested weeks later.

COMING SOON TO A FARM NEAR YOU



If you see a helicopter flying low over a nearby farm, know that your farm neighbors are caring for the land by participating in a soil conservation project.

Aerial cover crop seeding will soon be done over local cropland. A helicopter will drop winter rye grass seed to establish a "cover crop" that will protect the soil after the main crop is harvested. This controlled seed application uses a Global Positioning System (GPS) to precisely map where seed is distributed.

The aerial seeding will take place between **late August and early September** in towns across Massachusetts. Weather and other variables will determine the exact flight schedule.

Farms are participating voluntarily and are receiving financial and technical assistance for this conservation practice from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.



MASSACHUSETTS

Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov/



For more information: (413)443-1776 x 3 or Daniel.Tighe@ma.usda.gov

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