

Overwintering Cover Crops

The Chippewa Valley Producer Led Watershed held a field day looking at cover crop establishment demonstration trials in April. Of the four sites that toured, all within a mile of each other; all planted at different dates, and planted after 3 different crops, the farmers wanted to see what performed well and what was a less lucrative investment. The table below shows the over-wintering performance of the different sites.

Of note, some farmers, especially just getting into cover crops prefer a cover that winter kills to give them some erosion support in the fall without adding an extra termination need in the spring. Many farmers are also pursuing different cover crop species beyond good ol' rye in search of greater diversity.

The surprise of the day was hairy vetch's failure to overwinter. Furthermore, winter camelina appeared to have much fewer roots than anticipated for the amount of above-ground growth.



Dan Mauzu (UWEX) showing CVPLWG councilmember Steve Prince the root structure of winter camelina

| Cover Crop | Planting Date | Expected to Overwinter | Survived in Chippewa County April '26 |
|------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Winter Wheat | Oct | Yes | Yes |
| Winter Rye | Aug, Sept, Oct | Yes | Yes |
| Hairy Vetch | Aug, Sept, Oct | Yes | No |
| Berseem Clover | Aug, Sept, Oct | No | No |
| Winter Triticale | Aug, Sept, Oct | Yes | Poorly |
| Winter Camelina | Aug, Sept, Oct | Yes | Poorly |



Winter Camelina

