AG. WATER QUALITY ACT

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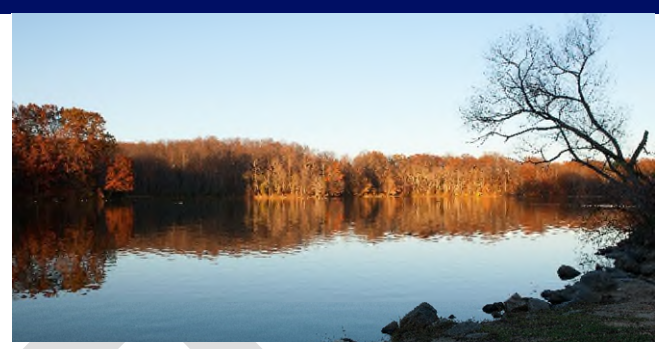

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE | **FUNDING ASSISTANCE** | **IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS**

COVER CROPS

CROPS BMP #13

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Description: A close growing crop (grass, legume, or small grain) grown primarily for the purpose of temporarily protecting from erosion and improving the soil.

AWQA Minimum Requirements: Plant crops such as cereal rye, oats, and winter wheat to temporarily protect the soil when crop residues are not adequate following crop production. The population of cover crop and resulting crop canopy must be adequate to protect the cropland against soil erosion.

Recommendations: A grain drill, band seeder, no till seeder, or broadcast seeder may be used. Aerial seeding is common in parts of western Kentucky, especially to establish a cover crop in standing corn or soybeans just before harvest. Inoculate legume seed just before sowing. Adhere to recommended seeding rates and dates. Consider previous crop and herbicides when selecting species of cover crop. Terminate a cover crop 14 days before planting the cash crop to reduce risks of seedling diseases and insects.

Technical References

University Publications
- Winter Cover Crops (ID-113)
- Cover Crop Benefits/Challenges in KY (AGR-240)
- Lime & Nutrient Recommendations 18-19 (AGR-1)

USDA/NRCS Publications
- Practice Code 340- Cover Crops
- NRCS Cover Crops & Soil Health Webpage

Funding Assistance Options

State Cost Share
- See your local Conservation District to apply.

Kentucky Ag. Development Fund (KADB/KAFC)
- Select from available program options here.

NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Select from available program options here.

Important Considerations

Water Quality Benefit (💧-💧💧💧💧): 💧

Wildlife Benefits
- Contact the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife's Habitat Improvement Program how to improve wildlife habitat with select BMPs (1-800-858-1549).