



PURPLE TOP TURNIPS

Producers may know that cover crops benefit the soil and agricultural operations, but do they know the benefits of each species? Each month a different cover crop species will be highlighted to provide producers with information needed to successfully grow cover crops or alternative forages on their operation.

AT A GLANCE

- Reach maximum production levels between 70 to 90 days
- Part of the brassica family, and used as cover crop worldwide
- Can also be used for grazing livestock and wildlife when mature, depending on weather

PLANTING DETAILS

- Should be planted from April 15 to September 15 north of interstate 94.
- High seed count per lb of 200k seed per pound
- Seeding rates vary based on whether it's incorporated or aerial seeded, but should be around 2lbs/acre
- Wait to plant until soil is 45 degrees, leaving ample time for turnips to reach full potential before they winterkill when soil reaches 20 degrees

ABOUT PURPLE TOP TURNIPS

- Part of the brassica family; related to mustards found in Western Asia & Europe as wildtypes
- By 1881 turnips were being grown throughout the world
- Quick growth makes turnips a great crop to plant a bit later into the season than many other cover crops

BENEFITS

Reduce Compaction, Provide Nutrients

The large roots of the turnips make it excellent at breaking up compaction, and scavenging for nutrients.

Crop Breakdown

When turnips winterkill, biomass breaks down and releases nutrients into the zone of cash crops.

Grazing

When given enough time for growth, purple top turnips are an excellent grazing species for both livestock and wildlife; typically between May and August depending on the the weather.



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