

FALL COVER CROPS

A multitude of benefits, including:

- ✓ Reduced Soil Erosion from wind and water
- ✓ Building Soil Organic Matter by having plants growing longer
- ✓ Establishing a Commercial Crop (ie. Winter Wheat, Fall Rye)
- ✓ Increasing Biological Activity of Soil
- ✓ Reduced Nitrate Leaching in fall months
- ✓ Yield Improvements in subsequent crops

Fall Cover Crops Following Potato Harvest:

Target fields harvested before Oct 10-15th

Early fields: Winter Wheat/Fall Rye (to harvest)
Barley/Oats/Ryegrass/Fall Rye (cover)

Later fields: Fall Rye/Winter Triticale (most reliable)
will germinate in soil temps of 5° C +

Establishment: Tillage pass/Sowing (wheat)
Broadcast before potato digging
Broadcast after potato digging

Pick something cheap/easy to get ground covered!

Fall Cover Crops Year Before Potatoes:

Primary Tillage in late August or September, before potato harvest starts.

Options: Brassicas (mustard, tillage radish, kale, etc)
Grasses/Cereals (barley, oats, ryegrass)
Peas (N fixing legume)
Mixtures of all of these

Choose species/mixtures that will establish quickly in the fall, provide residue over winter, won't regrow in the spring to allow for easier land preparation ahead of potatoes

Resources:

Eastern Canadian Cover Crop Decision Tool: <http://decision-tool.incovercrops.ca>
SARE <https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Topic-Rooms/Cover-Crops>

