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Midwest Cover Crops Council – Decision Tool

Adoption of cover crops is all over the spectrum. To some growers, cover crops are a mainstay in their operation. Others may still be figuring out how they work. Fortunately, there are lots of good resources available to help. One of them is the *Cover Crops Decision Tool* available from the *Midwest Cover Crops Council*.

Founded almost 20 years ago, the *Midwest Cover Crops Council* has placed an emphasis on cover crop adoption based on sound agronomic principles. The many resources available on their website (<https://www.midwestcovercrops.org/>) are designed with the grower in mind. One of those resources is their *Cover Crop Decision Tool*.

Vetted through lengthy discussions among University researchers, government agency experts, growers, industry, and others, the power of the decision tool comes in its ability to search its large cover crop database. This database includes ratings for each crop based on what they might provide. Going after nitrogen? Sort crops based on their nitrogen scavenging ability. If grazing is an interest, the tool provides a ranked list of options to choose from. Need an erosion fighter? A crop with lasting residue? Choose up to three different goals and the decision tool helps rank them based on characteristics included in the database.

Recommendations are provided based on local adaptation (you'll be asked for your state and county of planting), and each crop includes information on planting, termination, characteristics, and even potential advantages and disadvantages. Change your goals or cash crop options and recommendations are adjusted accordingly. Information on each crop includes cultural information plus additional cover crop resources you may want to consider as well.

The decision tool is by no means the only source of cover crop information available – not by a long shot. It can however be a great tool for evaluating a new cover crop or trying to figure out how something you're already familiar with might work better. Check it out at the link above.