



Fall Mustard

- Yellow mustard
- Brown or Indian mustard
- Black mustard

- (*Sinapsis alba*)
- (*Brassica hirta*)
- (*Brassica nigra*)

In the Northeast mustard is used as a fall-planted cover crop with the expectation of it being winter killed. This crop thrives in the cool conditions of fall and can give 100 % ground cover. It adds organic matter, break up hardpan and suppress weeds in the following crop. Soil borne diseases may be suppressed by glucosinolates in the residue.



There are three species of mustard that behave similarly when sown in the fall.

Land preparation	Firm seed bed free of weeds to ensure a good stand. Available nitrogen levels at 120 lbs N/acre. May require sulfur application at 6:1 N:S. ⁱ Vegetable land often has sufficient nutrients.
Seeding rate	9-15 lbs./acre ⁱⁱ Drill 5-12 lbs./acre Broadcast 10-15 lbs./acre ⁱⁱ Cover 1/2 in. After seeding roll the ground to improve seed to soil contact but not to break up soil aggregates.
Seeding date	Mid July through August. 4-6 weeks to flowering.
Seed sources	Rupp Seeds, MinnDak Growers
Maintenance	None
Control	Winter kill followed by incorporation in the Spring. Do not let mustards go to seed.
Tips	Mustards are magnets for flea beetles, but less so in the fall. Diamond-back moth larvae are attracted to this crop ⁱ . Do not use in rotations with other Brassicas. Fall mustards leave little spring

residue. Used for disease control after onions and lettuce on the muck. Suppress *Verticillium* in potato.ⁱⁱⁱ and reduce weeds in the following crop.^{iv}

ⁱ McGuire, A. 2003. Mustard Extension bulletin 19525 http://www.grant-adams.wsu.edu/agriculture/covercrops/green_manures/index.htm

ⁱⁱ Clark, A. 2007. Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 3rd ed., Sustainable Agriculture Network. p.70.

ⁱⁱⁱ Snapp, S.S. et al. Mustards – A Brassica Cover Crop for Michigan,

^{iv} Snapp, S.S. and D. Mutch, 2003. Cover Crop Choices for Michigan Vegetables Michigan State University Extension Bulletin E 2896