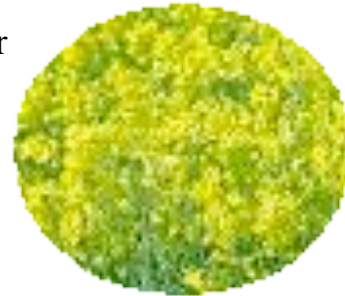


Forage Turnip and Rape

Brassica rapa var. *rapa* and *Brassica napus*

As fall seeded Brassicas, turnips and rape offer the benefit of weed suppression in the following cropⁱ with quick decomposition after being turned under. Turnip and rape grow quickly and are good at reducing surface compaction while providing winter cover and fall weed suppression.



Land preparation

Smooth seed bed weed free, well drained with enough moisture.

Seeding rate

Turnips
Drill 4-7 lb/ac, 1/2 in deep.
Broadcast 10-12 lb/ac, cover 1/2 – 3/4 in.ⁱⁱ
Use the higher rate if fall weed suppression is the goal.
Rape
Drill 5-10 lb/ac, less than 3/4 in deep.
Broadcast 8-14 lb/acⁱⁱ
Cover up to 1 in. ⁱⁱⁱ
Seed can be no-tilled into suppressed sod or seeded into a conventionally prepared seed bed.^{iv} Till as necessary to kill the first flush of weeds to ensure a weed free seedbed. After seeding roll the ground to improve seed to soil contact but not to break up soil aggregates.

Seeding date

August

Seed sources

Ernst Conservation Seed , AMPAC Seed Company

Maintenance

Avoid wet spots

Control

Incorporate in Spring, any time before full flowering.

Tips

These cover crops can harbor brassica diseases, do not use in rotation with brassicas. Also useful for suppressing Sclerotinia in lettuce.

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

ⁱⁱ Clark, A. 2007. Managing Cover Crops Profitably, 3rd ed., Sustainable Agriculture Network. p. 89.

ⁱⁱⁱ Johnny's Selected Seeds. 1997. Green Manures A Mini-Manual. p.6.

^{iv} Appin Forage Turnip, fact sheet, AMPAC Seed Company.