



Holmes Agro-Nomic Newsletter

June • 2026

Choosing the Right Cover Crop for 2026

Are you interested in planting a cover crop this summer or fall? Holmes Agro offers a variety of cover crops to help you reach your soil goals. There can be multiple soil health benefits to planting a cover crop including reduced soil erosion, improved soil structure and organic matter. Cover crops can also help with weed suppression, ability to fix or scavenge nitrogen, support of pollinators and beneficial insects, break disease or pest cycles, enhanced water infiltration, and potential livestock forage. With the windy spring season we have had so far this year, now is a great opportunity to make sure our soil stays right where we need it. Here is just a few of our cover crop options we have to offer you:

Oats

- A winter-killing cover that leaves a clean seedbed in spring
- Quick fall erosion control after wheat or early corn silage
- Emergency feed
- A good companion for species like radish or peas

Groundbreaker radish

- Fall-planted cover, resistant to early frost but winter-kills
- Deep penetrating taproot that reduces soil compaction, builds organic matter and improves nutrient recycling

Crimson Clover

- Fall-planted cover that winter-kills or occasionally overwinters in southern Ontario
- Fast fall growth, fixes nitrogen quickly in a short window, attractive to pollinators, great companion crop

Rye

- An overwintering cover that provides early spring biomass
- Better weed suppression, especially before no-till corn or soybeans
- Can scavenge nitrogen and prevent nutrient leaching
- Compaction reduction and improved tilth with deep roots

Want to figure out what option would be the best for your operation, reach out to our team, we've got you covered!

Hands-On Learning at Soil Compaction Day

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) is committed to advancing local agriculture through the discovery, testing, and adoption of innovative production and stewardship practices. In support of this mission, they are excited to host a Soil Compaction Day on July 16, 2026, at Tupling Farms in Dufferin County.

This unique, hands-on educational event will showcase real-time comparisons of equipment, tire technologies, and management practices under practical field conditions. Attendees will have the opportunity to see firsthand how different equipment impacts soil health and compaction, supported by live demonstrations and data-driven results.

The event will bring together farmers, agronomists, equipment specialists, researchers, and industry leaders for a full day of learning, networking, and discussion. Through expert presentations, field demonstrations, and interactive exhibits, Soil Compaction Day aims to increase awareness of soil compaction and its long-term effects on crop productivity and farm sustainability.

Getting More Value from Your Fungicide Application

Fungicide can be a great tool to protect overall plant health, stay green and prevent disease. Soybean flowering is a key time to monitor for white mould, a disease that can significantly reduce yields with humid conditions and dense crop canopies that favour infection. Fungicide applications between the R1 and R5 growth stages are an important management tool, with the ideal timing at R2 (10–14 days after first flower). In high-risk fields, a two-pass fungicide program may be warranted, with product rotation recommended to help manage resistance.

Plant health is not the only potential benefits with this pass. A fungicide application is a great opportunity to get one more shot of fertilizer on your crop. K20s is one of the most economical options to provide nitrogen, potassium, sulphur and micronutrients. With potassium acetate being one of the most plant available forms of potassium, this easy-to-handle product can give your crop the boost it needs, supporting plant health, improving stress tolerance, and maximizing nutrient-use efficiency.

If you want to make the most of every pass, reach out to our team to see how we can take your yields to the next level!

New Product Alert – MicroBoost

Holmes Agro has partnered with LaSalle Agri to bring you the best of the best new products! We are now carrying MicroBoost. MicroBoost is a cost effective phosphorus product designed to compliment your existing fertilizer program and help you build or maintain the phosphorus levels of your soil. With the rising cost of fertilizer, we want to help you get the most bang for your buck, with this powdered fertilizer waiting to be applied after your wheat harvest this fall!

***** Check the website holmesagro.com for general information and upcoming important dates *****

Protecting Pastures Through Smarter Grazing

The goal of grazing livestock is to optimize feed use, production, and labor efficiency.

The 2025 season highlighted how heat and moisture stress can quickly degrade pastures.

To maximize pasture profitability, regularly monitor pasture condition to prevent overgrazing. Adjust animal numbers, rotation timing, or rest periods as needed to protect plant health and maintain long-term productivity.

Rotational grazing remains one of the most effective tools for improving pasture resilience and productivity. By balancing livestock numbers with available forage, allowing adequate recovery periods, and adjusting grazing plans in response to weather conditions, producers can help prevent overgrazing while maintaining healthy, vigorous stands. Research has shown that giving forage plants sufficient rest after grazing supports root growth, improves forage production, and can increase the overall carrying capacity of a pasture.

2026 Product Return Deadlines

We accept returns for any unopened, undamaged, skids, bulk bags or unopened chemical jugs. We do ask the following:

1. If we are picking up returns at your site, we prefer it if you can be there to help load. If you cannot be, please leave returns out for us, and if required, we will ask for approval to use your equipment.
 2. If you are bringing returns to any of our locations, please ensure all products are on a skid to help ease the unloading process. Please call ahead to let us know you are bringing back returns.
 3. We are no longer accepting seed returns. Please call the office should you have questions. Please return **all unopened crop protection** products as soon as you are finished with the product or by **July 31**.
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Pest Management, Thresholds and IPM

When is the last time that you have seen enough pests in your field that you considered doing something about it? Insects, mites, and nematodes reduce yield by damaging plant structure, transmitting disease, or stressing crops during key growth stages. Some examples include soybean aphids in soybeans, cutworms in corn, cereal leaf beetle in wheat, Colorado potato beetle in potatoes. Pest presence alone does not always justify intervention. Intervention should only occur when populations exceed the economic threshold; the level at which expected crop loss exceeds the cost of control. Spray timing is crucial as some early infestations during vegetative or reproductive stages can have disproportionate yield impacts, and delayed applications may miss the most susceptible life stage of the pest.

When observing pests in the field, many of us may think to eradicate anything that isn't our primary crop, however, there are also many helpful critters we want to preserve. Lady beetles and lacewings both work hard to keep aphid populations down, whereas ground beetles prey on cutworms, slugs and other soil-dwelling pests. When there is a variety of different insects to balance out the ecosystem, intervention may be avoided entirely. Unnecessary applications can remove these beneficial populations. When predators are accidentally removed, pest populations can rebound quickly because their natural control has been disrupted.

Pollinators are another group of beneficial insects that deserve consideration as they can directly influence yield and seed production in some crops. Protecting pollinators is a matter of timing and product choice. Applying insecticides during times when bees are actively foraging or using products highly toxic to pollinators during flowering periods, to increases risk. Where possible, spraying during evening hours, target specific pests, and avoid unnecessary applications help preserve pollinator populations.

Watch It Grow: A Look Inside the 2026 Plot Farm

As always, the plot farm is jam packed with potential this year to ensure we are getting the right products into your hands. This year's wheat trials include three different varieties with two different starters, one with Mosaic's PowerCoat. Our Enlist variety trials include 14 varieties from five different companies. Our Xtend trials include eight different varieties from 3 different companies. On soybeans we also have a starter trial and a topdress trial featuring our Polysulphate product. For corn we have 16 varieties from four different companies. We have a root structure trial featuring two different varieties and three different planting population. The final field features four different starter blends including Mosaic's PowerCoat and Polysulphate. We look forward to sharing our results post harvest!

Mark Your Calendar!

July 16th - Georgian Central OSCIA Compaction Day, Redickville

July 18th - Sheldon Creek - Day on the Farm

July 23rd - Watch it Grow 2026 - Innovation you can walk through

July 31st - Chemical return deadline

***** Please email media@holmesagro.com to sign up for our e-newsletter *****