



Capitol Region Agronomy Team Report

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and poorly prepared land, rye out performs all other cover crops.

Benefits

- **Nutrients.** Rye is the best cool season cereal for absorbing soil nitrogen. Its fast-growing, fibrous root system can take up and hold as much as 100-pounds per acre, but typically 25 to 50-pounds of nitrogen until spring. Rye increases the concentration of exchangeable potassium near the surface of the soil by bringing it up from lower in the soil profile.

- **Soil stability.** Along with conservation tillage practices, rye provides soil protection on sloping fields and holds soil loss to a tolerable level.

- **Versatile.** In our region, rye can serve as an overwintering cover crop after corn, before or after soybeans, fruits or vegetables. It is not the best choice before a small grain crop, such as wheat or barley, unless you can kill the rye reliably and completely, because volunteer rye seed would lower the

value of other grains.

- **Organic matter.** Rye provides up to 10,000-pounds of dry matter per acre with 3,000 to 4,000-pounds typical in the Northeast.

- **Weed suppressor.** In cool seasons, rye is one of the best for out competing weeds, especially small seeded, light-sensitive annuals such as lambsquarters, redroot pigweed, velvetleaf, chickweed, and foxtail. Rye also suppresses many weeds allelopathically (as a natural herbicide), including dandelions and Canada thistle.

- **Pest suppressor.** Rye reduces insect pest problems in rotations and attracts significant numbers of beneficials such as lady bugs.

Establishment

Drill one to two bushels per acre no deeper than two-inches deep or broadcast one and one-half to three bushels and lightly disk or cultipack. Very late seeding rates can be up to six bushels per acre to assure an adequate stand.

Corps' Decision To Cost Farmers, Business Millions

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) is outraged by the recent announcement that the Army Corps of Engineers will delay a benchmark study on \$1 billion in improvements on the upper Mississippi rivers.

"We are not disappointed, we are livid," said Paul Ber-

tels, NCGA's director of production and marketing.

Every farmer out there should be equally as irate, according to NCGA. Farmers should be telling their congressional representatives that the Corps' Navigation study should continue without delay.

"The Corps has spent \$54 million on this study, and what do we have to show for it? Absolutely nothing. In actuality, this will not be a one-year delay, but will result in several years of delay. The Corps should release the information they have gathered for public debate and comment."

NCGA is seeking improvements on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers — namely doubling the 600-foot lock chambers at Mississippi River Lock and Dam 25, 24, 22, 20 and 21, and at the La-Grange and Peoria locks on the Illinois River. For the past seven years, NCGA has watched the Corps of Engineers conduct the \$54 million upper Mississippi-Illinois Water Navigation Study and has attempted to be fully engaged in the study process every step of the way, noted Bertels.

"However, the Corps is obviously not making the con-

cerns of farmers a top priority," he continued. "There can be no delay in upgrading the aging and deteriorating U.S. river infrastructure. These delays cost U.S. farmers and business an average of \$94 million per year. Without continued investments in the transportation infrastructure, U.S. farmers are being placed at a severe disadvantage as foreign countries increase their commitment to developing their agricultural export markets."

The lock and dam structures on the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers are more than 50 years old and are unable to handle the current volume of barge traffic on the river. Subsequently, the resulting delays of three to four hours at each facility costs approximately \$900 per barge.

"The Corps should release the current report for public review, and second, the administration has dictated that portions of the study must be revised, then the Corps must revisit each point of contention," Bertels said.



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