



Red Clover

MICHIGAN - COVER CROP FACT SHEET

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)



Identifying Features:

- Large, elongated leaflets with inverted, V-shaped variegation
- Three leaflets per leaf

Planting Tips

- **Planting date:** August – early September or frost seeded in late winter (February/March)
- **Seeding depth:** 0.25 inches – 0.5 inches – rainfall/soil moisture needed to get good establishment
- **Seeding rate:** drilled = 8 – 12 lbs PLS/Ac (272,160 Seeds/lb); overseeded = 9 – 13 lbs PLS/Ac
- **Minimum temperature for germination:** 41°F



Termination Tips

Easy to terminate with herbicide or mechanically
www.canr.msu.edu/resources/cover-crop-termination
for more information

Performance

- Dry Matter:** 1500–6000 lbs/Ac
- Nitrogen Source:** Excellent (Total N: 50–200 lbs/Ac)
- Soil Builder:** Very Good
- Erosion Fighter:** Very Good
- Weed Fighter:** Good
- Good Grazing:** Very Good
- Mechanical Forage Harvest:** Very Good
- Grain Seed Harvest:** Good
- Cash Crop Interseed:** Excellent
- Attract Beneficial Insects:** Excellent

Residue Decomposition Rate

(C:N Ratio)



Additional Considerations

- Tolerant to shade, flooding and low fertility
- Good fit in weather destroyed crops or prevent plant acres
- No allelopathic affect ahead of corn
- Possible N fixer
- Low water use

This fact sheet is a collaborative effort of Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide information on cover crops. For more information consult <https://www.midwestcovercrops.org/michigan/>. USDA participants should follow the specifications in their conservation plan and the NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.