Why Cover Crops?

Cover crops improve soil quality
- Increase soil organic matter (SOM)
- Reduce soil erosion – wind and rain
- Improve soil structure and quality
- Improve soil tilth
- Enhance soil biological diversity
- Remediate subsoil compaction

Cover crops improve soil fertility
- Supply nitrogen (legumes)
- Reduce nutrient leaching
- Increase nutrient cycling
- Move nutrients from sub-soil to top-soil
- Improve fertilizer use efficiency

Cover crops reduce pest problems
- Suppress weeds
- Reduce diseases
- Reduce nematodes
- Provide habitat and food for beneficial organisms

Other benefits from cover crops
- Reduce labor
- Reduce fuel use
- Reduce land preparation
- Help with timely planting
- Reduce irrigation requirement
- Reduce total production costs
- Improve water quality
Challenges with cover crops

- Cost of establishment
- May be difficult to kill
- May compete with your crop for resources
- Not a cash crop, lose income
- Require more management

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<th>Surface residue</th>
<th>Pest control</th>
<th>Nitrogen fixation</th>
<th>Weed control</th>
<th>Compaction remediation</th>
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For more information, please contact Dr. Franklin Chukwuma, Coordinator, Outreach Centers at frankline@alcorn.edu or 601-877-2312.