

OATS



Considering adding oats to a corn-soybean rotation?

We say go for it. Expanding your crop rotation leads to several **advantages**, not only for your bottom line but also for the local ecosystem.

TIME SAVINGS

Adding oats to a corn-soybean rotation can **split up your harvest workload**.



INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

From a pest management standpoint, adding oats can help to break up your current cropping rotation disease cycle and lower soybean cyst nematode levels.

NEW MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Adding oats can **diversify your marketing opportunities**.



INCREASED YIELDS

Incorporating oats into your corn-soybean rotation have been round to **increase yields by 7-9%**.

REDUCED INPUT FOR CORN CROP

Underseed oats with a legume such as clover or plant a diverse cover crop mix that includes legumes following oat harvest. Both options can build soil nitrogen levels ahead of the following years' corn crop.



HEALTHIER SOILS

Adding a crop to your rotation will also **build soil organic matter, increase water infiltration, and diversify soil biology**.

Before adding oats (or any crop) to your operation, remember these important considerations:



FIELD SELECTION

Planting oats after soybeans is ideal. Oats can also be planted after corn but this comes with two additional considerations – 1) residue management would be key to ensure a good stand, and 2) nitrogen rates on oats will be higher to avoid lower yields.



EQUIPMENT

Oats will require planting with **a grain drill or a no-till drill** depending on your operation. Also, a swather or windrow head.



HERBICIDE ROTATIONAL RESTRICTIONS

Pay attention to your chemical programs. **Late applications of Flexstar on soybeans will be an issue for oats** as well as corn. Pay attention to your application rates of **Atrazine – oats planted after corn do not like high rates of application**. Make sure your sprayer is clean when making applications to your oat crop – improper sprayer cleanout can kill your oats! Caution against using yellows in soybeans (trifluralins like treflan, sonalan, and prowl) they can hold back yields on small grains.



VARIETY SELECTION

As with any crop, it can pay to select the best variety for your farm. Consider the best option for your farm when looking at **plant type** (early versus late maturity) and **plant height**. Plant height can play a factor in straw yield and can contribute to crop lodging. **Rushmore oats have a high test weight but like lodge. Saddle is a high-yielding variety but it is a shorter plant type.**



PLANTING RATES

Stick to 3-4bu/ac. Higher seeding rates discourage tillering and help to increase grain test weight.



FERTILITY

Oats are a great scavenger and require less fertility than corn or soybeans. Plan on roughly 30–50 lbs of NPK with 10 lbs of sulfur (ex: 30-30-30-10S). 60 lbs/acre after soybeans for yields over 100 bushel. If you have high fertility levels and a heavy manure history, no additional fertilizer may be needed.



LOGISTICS

Plan your schedule based on the needs of your farm. Minnesota is a big state – optimum planting dates greatly depend on the location of your farm. For example:

In southern Minnesota, early-to-late planting dates would fall between March 20 and April 20.

Pre-plant fertilizer applied before planting date	Planting March-April	Nitrogen application (optional) May 1-10	Herbicide & fungicide application May 21- June 5	Second pass fungicide application at flag leaf June 5-15	Swathing July 16-23	Harvest July 23-August 13
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Keep in mind that some of these operations may overlap with operations and application times for corn and soybeans (ex: oat harvest overlapping R2,R3 fungicide application on soybeans). Check Crop Insurance Dates.



WEED CONTROL

Start clean. This could mean starting in the fall if you have heavy winter annual pressure. Consider 2-4D for straight oats seeding or MCPA for oats underseeded with clover.



HARVEST

Windrow or standing? If you have weed escapes, windrowing may be a better option with regard to weed and crop dry-down. Alternatively, oats can be harvested standing with a soybean flex header. It is important to remember that your oat crop is a higher volume of material than soybeans so you may not be able to take a full header swath. **Be patient during your oat harvest** – there are only about five dew-free hours each harvest day. If conditions are not dry, you may end up spending five harvest hours unplugging your combine.



STORAGE

If you require grain storage, make sure your grain bin floors are approved for oat storage. Chisel-cut aeration floors can cause leaking grain and pest problems.



Visit our site to learn more about how to reduce inputs, increase yields, and build soil health on your farm!