



Winter Cereals

Sustainability in Action



SEEDING WINTER WHEAT INTO CHEMFALLOW

Many growers across the Prairies are facing challenging circumstances. Due to wet spring and summer conditions, millions of acres have gone unseeded on the Prairies. These acres not only pose a problem this year by reducing income and increasing field management expenses, but could also be a further challenge to seeding in 2012.

However, there is a **solution: seed winter wheat into chemfallow.**

Having a crop growing this fall will help reduce the excess moisture, and also eliminate the potential challenges of seeding in those wet fields in 2012.

As seeding winter wheat into chemfallow requires different planning than seeding into other stubble, use this checklist to help you plan, prepare and seed successfully.

CHECKLIST:

- ☑ **Minimize stubble disturbance:** Stubble is necessary to trap snow and insulate your winter wheat crop from winterkill. Year old stubble will break apart much easier than freshly harvested stubble.
 - If conducting multiple spraying operations, try to stay in the same tracks to minimize tire stubble knock-down.
 - Let weeds bolt before spraying. Tall weed carcasses trap snow effectively.
 - Use wide equipment (spraying and seeding) to minimize tire stubble knock-down.
 - Use narrow openers when seeding.
 - Avoid harrowing and cultivating if possible.
- ☑ **Line up your seed early:** It's projected that there will be a high volume of acreage seeded into winter wheat this fall. Make sure you contact your local seed supplier early, so you are not scrambling for seed at the last minute.
- ☑ **Decide on seed treatment:** Based on seed quality, crop rotation and weather conditions determine whether you are at a high risk for seedling disease development. If so, consider using a seed treatment to minimize the effects of the disease.



Waiting for weeds to get tall before spraying will improve a field's ability to trap snow this winter.

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For more information please contact one of our winter wheat specialists at Ducks Unlimited Canada

- ✓ **Line up your starter fertilizer:** P, K, S, and micronutrient fertilizers should be managed similarly to a spring wheat crop. Manage these appropriately to have a well established winter wheat crop in the fall.
- ✓ **Decide on a nitrogen management plan:** Due to its high yield potential, winter wheat has a high N requirement. High soil moisture in the fall can lead to excessive spring losses if N is applied at seeding time. Conversely, it may be too wet in the spring to apply N in a timely fashion to meet the crop needs. Split applications and/or use of specialty nitrogen products may reduce risk of loss and best fit situations where there is a lot of moisture.
- ✓ **Seed into weed free conditions:** Eliminate perennial, biennial, and winter annual weeds as best as you can before establishing your winter wheat crop. Chemical control options are preferred over tillage to minimize stubble loss. Destroying green cereal growth prior to seeding is especially important to reduce the “green bridge” that can transmit wheat streak mosaic virus.
- ✓ **Set appropriate expectations:** Seeding winter wheat into chemfallow is not the optimum situation. Potential for poor stubble, higher N losses, and poor seedbed conditions may result in lower yields, lower weed competitive ability, and later crop maturity. Don't let this get you down on this flexible and profitable crop.

The shared
vision
of

Ducks Unlimited Canada and Bayer CropScience for the future of agriculture includes a stewardship model that recognizes the agricultural productivity of farmland while retaining and improving the habitat available to North America's waterfowl and other wildlife.

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Conserving Canada's Wetlands



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