



# Cereal Rye

## MICHIGAN - COVER CROP FACT SHEET

### Cereal Rye (*Secale cereale*)



#### Identifying Features:

- Blue-green leaf color
- Hairy leaf sheath

### Planting Tips

- **Seeding Dates:** mid August-late October
- **Seeding Rate**
  - **Drilled Seeding Rate:** 55–110 lbs PLS/Ac
  - **Broadcast Seeding Rate:** 60–120 lbs PLS/Ac
  - **Aerial Seeding Rate:** 66–132 lbs PLS/Ac
- **Drilled Seeding Depth:**  $\frac{3}{4}$ –1½ inches
- **Seed Size:** 18,000 seeds/lb
- **Seeding Rate Adjustments:** Lower if sandy soils prone to dry periods in spring
- **Minimum germination temperature:** 34°F
- **pH tolerance** 5–7

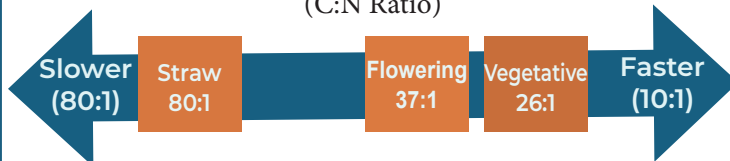


### Performance

**Dry Matter:** 1,500–4,500 lb/DM/Ac  
**Nitrogen Scavenger:** Excellent  
**Soil Builder:** Excellent  
**Erosion Fighter:** Excellent  
**Weed Fighter:** Excellent  
**Good Grazing:** Excellent  
**Mechanical Forage Harvest:** Excellent  
**Cash Crop Interseed:** Excellent  
**Attract Beneficial Insects:** Fair

### Residue Decomposition Rate

(C:N Ratio)



### Termination Tips

- Terminate with tillage, herbicide, roller crimper or mowing
- Timely termination is important, late termination can cause N to be tied up and heavy residue may be difficult to plant into
- If using systemic herbicide, make sure cover crop is actively growing
- Terminate at flowering if using roller crimper or mowing
- Using VNS seed can cause challenges with termination as plants may mature at different times

*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 [www.midwestcovercrops.org/michigan/](http://www.midwestcovercrops.org/michigan/). USDA participants should follow the specifications in their conservation plan and the NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.*