Cover Crop Advances in Michigan in 2016
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Introduction
Michigan produces more than 300 agricultural commodities, making it the 2nd most diverse agricultural industry in the nation. This diversity is also reflected in the range of uses for cover crops. Michigan growers are integrating cover crops into:
- Field crop rotations
- Vegetable rotation
- Orchards (Fruits and nuts)
- Vineyards
- Grazing rotations
As a result of this demand, Michigan produced a variety of cover crop related research projects, extension events, publications, society presentations, and MSU course work in 2016.

Cover Crop Research
- Over 25 research projects examining cover crops were conducted by MSU researchers in 2016
- Objectives spanned multiple topic areas, including:
  - Commodity specific cover crops
  - Cover crop management
  - Cover crops as forages/feed
  - Pest/disease management
  - Soil fertility
  - Soil health/biology
- Funding for cover crop research in Michigan comes from a number of sources, including:
  - MI commodity groups (Corn, soybean, carrot, potato, cherry, etc.)
  - USDA- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) programs such as the Organic Agriculture Research & Extension Initiative (OREI)
  - Michigan’s Project GREEEN
  - CERES Trust

Cover Crop Extension Meetings & Field Days
- MSUE and MSU faculty held over 37 meetings and field days addressing cover crop management
- Over 3,000 people attended the 2016 meetings
- Cover crops were prominently featured at 3 stops in the first ever MSU Agriculture Innovation Day in Frankenmuth, MI on August 24th. Front, left to right: Lisa Tiemann, Erin Hill, Marilyn Thelen, Paul Gross, Christina Curell, Dean Baas. Back left to right: Aaron Brooker, James Sarah Hanks, Marshall (NRCS).
- Successful cover crops- From seed selection to planting techniques (E. Hill, K. Renner, A. Brooker)
- How do your soils handle rain? (P. Gross and J. Marshall)

More information can be found in the full 2016 MI report @ covercrops.msu.edu