

Soybeans can work well as a summer legume cover crop. Forage varieties usually produce more biomass. Because soybeans are often grown as a cash crop, it may not be wise to use them often as a cover crop. The same pathogens and pests that affect cash crops affect cover crops (e.g., nematodes, cut worms, stinkbugs, etc.).

Recommended Varieties

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Large Lad	Forage variety with high biomass, bush-type, disease resistance, and roundup ready (GMO). Seed is more expensive because of roundup resistance technology.	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Laredo	Forage variety with good biomass, more viney growth, seed is generally available and cheaper.	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Tyrone	Forage variety, used in wildlife food plots, less expensive than other forage soybeans.	

Planting Information

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (inches)	1 - ½	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	40 - 60	Use <i>Bradyrhizobium japonicum</i> inoculant. Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	50 - 75	Not a preferred method unless timely moisture is available for stand establishment. May consider drag or mowing of prior crop residues to aid in seed soil contact. Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	Not recommended.	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool

Termination Information

Information	Source
Soybeans can be terminated through tillage, mowing, herbicides, controlled grazing, and roller crimping. These will also winterkill, but not before viable seeds are produced.	
Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations. Always follow the herbicide label.	

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Cultural Traits

Traits	Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	4,000 - 10,000	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	50 - 150	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
Life Cycle	Summer annual legume	
Growth Habit	Upright to viney	
Preferred Soil pH	5.8 - 7.0	
Relative Seed Cost (\$/acre)	\$\$\$\$	Based on survey of seed costs using maximum price and max seeding rate
Min. Germination Temp (F)	50°	Midwest Cover Crops Council Selector Tool
Cautions	Consider using in a mix with annual summer grass due to low C:N ratio. Soybeans lack persistent residue for soil health benefits throughout the growing season. Potential for disease issues such as <i>Cylindrocladium</i> Black Rot - CBR and nematodes. Some nematode resistant soybean cultivars are available. Consult your local Extension, NRCS, and state Pest Management Handbook. Due to susceptibility to <i>Sclerotinia</i> and <i>Sclerotium rolfsii</i> (<i>Athelia rolfsii</i>), do not plant before legume cash crops or hemp unless fumigating before planting cash crop.	Clemson University

Sources:

Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center Annual Reports:

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ga/plantsanimals/?cid=nrcs144p2_022076

Midwest Cover Crop Selector Tool - Missouri data: <http://mccc.msu.edu/covercroptool/covercroptool.php>