

Common vetch can be used as a cover crop in the Piedmont, Mountains, and Ridge & Valley. It is less winter hardy than hairy vetch. Vetches generally produce more biomass and N than crimson clover. However, vetches can become weed since these are hard-seeded, which can be a particular problem for small grain producers. Uncoated (raw) vetches work well and contain ~50% more seed per pound than coated versions.

Recommended Varieties

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Cahaba White	Earlier growth than common hairy vetch. Resistant to root knot and soybean cyst nematode.	Grow Your Own N: Legumes in Row Crop Systems

Planting Information

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (inches)	1 - 2	Grow Your Own N: Legumes in Row Crop Systems
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	30 - 40	Use <i>Rhizobium leguminosarum biovar viciae</i> inoculant.
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	30 - 60	Broadcasting is preferred to drilling due to very small seed size.
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	N/A	Managing Cover Crops Profitably

Termination Information

Information	Source
Common vetch can be terminated by herbicides, rolling & crimping, mowing, or tillage. Mechanical termination is more successful at 80% bloom, but should be conducted before seed set.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
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Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	3,500 - 4,500	Grow Your Own N: Legumes in Row Crop Systems, Unpublished Literature Review in Piedmont – Gaskin
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	120 - 140	Grow Your Own N: Legumes in Row Crop Systems, Unpublished Literature Review in Piedmont – Gaskin
Life Cycle	Annual cool season legume	
Growth Habit	Prostrate viney	
Preferred Soil pH	6.0 – 7.0	
Relative Seed Cost (\$/acre)	\$\$	
Min. Germination Temp (F)	N/A	
Cautions	Abundant hard seed. Due to susceptibility to Sclerotinia and Sclerotium rolfsii (<i>Athelia rolfsii</i>), do not plant before any cash crop legumes or hemp unless fumigating before planting cash crop.	Clemson University

Sources:

Managing Cover Crops Profitably: <https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books>

Mitchell, C.C. and J. Mosjidis. 2006 Grow Your Own N: Legumes in Row Crop Systems. Agronomy Series Timely Information Alabama Cooperative Extension S-05-06