

Hairy vetch is used as a cover crop in the Piedmont, Mountains, and Ridge & Valley. Vetches generally produce more biomass and N than crimson clover. However, vetches can become weed since these are hard-seeded. This can be a particular problem for small grain producers. Woolypod vetch is a subspecies of hairy vetch so is included in this formation sheet. Uncoated (raw) vetches work well and contain ~50% more seed per pound than coated versions.

**Recommended Varieties**

Variety	Reasons Why	Source
Purple Bounty	Earlier variety and provides good biomass.	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Lana Woolypod sub variety	Earlier than other hairy vetches and similar to Dixie crimson clover in maturity.	Jimmy Carter Plant Materials Center data
AU Merit	Typically 15 days earlier than other vetches and produces high biomass.	Noble Research Institute

**Planting Information**

Information	Comments	Source
Drilled Seed Depth (inches)	½ - 1 ½	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Drilled Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	5 - 10 Use <i>Rhizobium leguminosarum biovar viciae</i> inoculant.	Mirsky et al. 2017
Broadcast Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	15 - 20	
Aerial Seeding Rate (lbs/acre)	N/A	

**Termination Information**

Information	Source
Hairy 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. Vetch should be killed 2 to 3 weeks prior to planting or sprayed at planting. It is difficult to kill which just tillage using chisel plows or harrows due to wrapping of the long vines. Better results are obtained when it is mowed before tillage.	Hairy Vetch as a Crop Cover, Managing Cover Crops Profitably, USDA Hairy Vetch Plant Guide
Consult your local Extension and state Pest Management Handbook for herbicide recommendations. Always follow the herbicide label.	

Continue to next page...

Cultural Traits

Traits	Comments	Source
Typical Dry Matter Range (lbs/acre)	3,500 - 5,000	Managing Cover Crops Profitably, Unpublished Literature Review in Piedmont - Gaskin
Typical Total N Range (lbs/acre)	125 - 175	Managing Cover Crops Profitably, Unpublished Literature Review in Piedmont - Gaskin
Life Cycle	Cool season annual legume	
Growth Habit	Viney, Prostrate or Climbing	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Preferred Soil pH	6.0 - 7.0	Well adapted to sandy soils. Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Relative Seed Cost (\$/acre)	\$\$\$	Based on survey of seed costs using maximum price and max seeding rate
Min. Germination Temp (F)	60°	Managing Cover Crops Profitably
Cautions	Up to 25% 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.	Hairy Vetch as a Cover Crop; Clemson University

Sources:

Hairy Vetch as a Cover Crop: <https://extension.psu.edu/hairy-vetch-as-a-crop-cover>

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

Mirsky, S.B., V.J. Ackroyd, S. Cordeau, W.S. Curran, M. Hashemi, S.C. Reberg-Horton, M.R. Ryan, and J.T. Spargo. 2017. Hairy Vetch Biomass across Eastern United States: Effects of Latitude, Seeding Rate and Date and Termination Timing. Agron. J. 109:1510-1519.

USDA Hairy Vetch Plant Guide: [https://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs\\_vivi.pdf](https://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs_vivi.pdf)