

# Cover Cropping with Confidence

## Local Mentors To Guide You Through On-Farm BMPs

*“A community based organization dedicated to providing leadership to protect and enhance local water, forests and soil.”*

**Mission Statement,**

**Maitland Valley Conservation Authority**

*“Farmers talking to farmers, using the strength of the network to support lasting adoption of sustainable practices, for an environmentally and financially sound future.”*

**Mission Statement,**

**Ontario Soil Network**

Maitland Conservation (MVCA) and the Ontario Soil Network (OSN) are partnering to pilot a project that will enable agricultural landowners to learn directly from their friendly, neighbourhood, innovative ag producers.

Through on-farm visits and discussions, small groups of farmers will be invited to learn about practices that are proving their weight in gold for these ag mentors, working in conjunction to conserve and protect soil health and productivity in Ontario.

Cover crops are not the only Best Management Practice (BMP) that we encourage adopting, however, this will be our network’s focus for 2023.



Cover crops are a terrific “catch all” BMP with a combination of amazing benefits including increasing organic matter, nutrient holding capacity, and soil porosity, and reducing erosion, chemical runoff, and the effects of soil compaction. Cover cropping is sweeping Ontario’s agricultural land for one simple reason: It works!

It would be simple to “impart wisdom” on the masses and hope for the best, but we recognize that there is a desire to connect with farmers that have years of personal experience. Our mentors will share their motivation to implement cover cropping, its benefits, its challenges, and give support to enable others to cover crop with confidence. Alan, Gerard, Joel, Thomas, and Tyler have all generously offered to share their knowledge and experience in cover crops.



These mentors are local and share so many of the same barriers that you might! A similar soil type, topography, the same weather

events, and, therefore, timing of planting, harvesting, spraying, etc.

Someone that lives in the same community, county, or watershed, and has knowledge of grants that are suitable and available to help support your conservation efforts. Someone who can share connections of local suppliers or Certified Crop Advisors. The benefits of this peer-to-peer network knows no property line and MVCA and OSN are proud and eager to help facilitate the connection and knowledge sharing that this pilot program will offer.

## Without further ado, meet our local cover crop heroes:

### Alan Willits (*Wingham, Ontario*)

- No-till soy and wheat crops, strip-till corn crops
- Cereal rye cover crops
- Using SWAT mapping to improve land management

### Gerard Grub (*Walkerton, Ontario*)

- Interseeding rye into corn, red clover after wheat
- Strip-Till corn & No-till wheat and soybeans for 22 years

### Joel Brodie (*Brucefield, Ontario*)

- Livestock & corn, soy, wheat rotation
- Minimum tillage
- Interseeding corn, wheat crops are cover cropped for grazing livestock



### Thomas Farrell (*Kincardine, Ontario*)

- Dairy farmer with corn, soy, wheat rotation
- Multi-species cover cropping for 6 years
- No-till/ minimum till for 20 years

### Tyler Papple (*Seaforth, Ontario*)

- Corn, Soy, Wheat rotation
- Implementing multi-species biostrip cover crops

If you are a rural landowner in the MVCA watershed, please reach out for the chance to be included in this network and share the opportunity to learn from our local leaders.

On-farm visits will begin in June 2023!

Email us for more info: [outreachtch@mvca.on.ca](mailto:outreachtch@mvca.on.ca)



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