

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

How to: Cover Crops

People new to the gardening world may hear or come across the term “cover crops” and wonder how it can benefit their own garden and how it differs from other soil enhancement options like fertilizer or compost.

What is a cover crop?

Cover crops are primarily used to enhance soil health, therefore leading to a better growing environment for items in the garden. They are also known as “green manure.” Fertilizers and compost also can enhance the soil health after a harvest, but cover crops are a natural option to replenish the nutrients. Cover crops are crops that return nutrients removed through a harvest back to the soil. Most often, cover crops replenish the soil with nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen. Cover crops can be used in combination with compost to create fertile soil.

How to plant cover crops:

To replenish the nutrients, a cover crop must grow and then die. They are usually sown directly into the garden and not transplanted after the summer harvest prior to winter. Plant cover crops one month before the first frost. To plant, loosen the soil up to 4 inches deep and remove all pre-existing growth. Smooth the soil out and scatter the cover crop seeds and rake the soil to cover the seeds. After they have grown, cover crops are not harvested but instead tilled into the soil, where their nutrients can then benefit the garden. To do so, cut the cover crop in the spring a few weeks prior to planting your garden. Leave the cut cover



[Cover Crop seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

crop in the garden for a week and then till it back into the soil. Be sure to cut down the cover crops before they go to seed to prevent unwanted growth later in the season.

Different types of cover crops:

Usually, cover crops come in the form of legumes, such as bell beans, clovers and more, and grasses, such as oats, barley and rye. Other forms of cover crops are oilseed radish and buckwheat. To take advantage of the three different types of cover crops, oftentimes gardeners will plant a mix of the three kinds.

Other benefits to cover crops:

In addition to replenishing the soil, cover crops can protect the garden plot from erosion over the winter. Cover crops also loosen the soil and protect the garden against weeds that set in after the growing season. Also, cover crops that bloom in the



100%
Non-GMO Seed



One Day
Shipping



100%
Satisfaction Guarantee



Family
Owned + Operated

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

spring prior to being cut and tilled into the soil can serve as a food source for bees and other helpful insects that will later pollinate the garden. Some cover crops can even be eaten or cut down and regrown multiple times during the season and used as mulch later on in the season.

Where to buy cover crops:

Urban Farmer offers countless options of different types of cover crops from brassicas to grasses and legumes on our website at ufseeds.com!



[Cover Crop seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)



100%
Non-GMO Seed



One Day
Shipping



100%
Satisfaction Guarantee



Family
Owned + Operated