

Cover Crop Research Topics

3 Research topics that we here are the Howard G. Buffett Foundation see as pivotal for advancing the adoption of cover crops are:

1. The level of impact corn Stover removal has on the soil and what role cover crops can play in preventing soil loss due to erosion and nutrient loss.
2. The possible role cover crops can play in replacing the use of synthetic N. How long do cover crops need to be used before enough organic N can be built up and sustained? Also what impact can cover crops have on weed suppression and control?
3. The identification and subsequent development of short season, high-yielding corn varieties that will allow for earlier harvest and earlier fall establishment of cover crops. Having short season corn varieties that do not sacrifice yield will be key in allowing growers to select more adequate cover crop varieties and get them established before winter.

The HGBF is willing to collaborate on these and other issues we find useful in helping growers learn more about the usefulness of cover crops. The incorporation of cover crops into the crop rotation will become more and more important as nutrient prices continue to rise and climate change dictates the need for more precise management practices.