

Growing Hemp At Oakley Farm

What's happening this month?



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The days are getting much longer, and the weather is fickle. The forecrop plots planted October 7, 2021, are growing in fits-and-starts just like the weather. Cosaque Oats, a black oat known for allelopathy, was planted a few weeks too early. It is covering the ground, but not as robust as the other three crops. The untreated plots are fairly well covered with weeds, including henbit, *Poa trivialis* ("Poa Triv" or rough bluegrass) and dandelions.

In the middle of the month, our research farm team terminated the forecrops and untreated plots during the few days of 70 °F plus temperatures. Depending on temperature, the plants should die in 10 to 14 days. Then the field will be rototilled and weed seeds allowed a week or more to germinate. The field will be rototilled lightly two more times after surface weed seeds germinate. Our target hemp planting date is the second week of May, depending on weather and field conditions. After the third tillage pass, hemp will be planted on the same day.

Hemp seed for the variety trial is beginning to arrive from breeders. New varieties will be compared to our current portfolio when grown after the forecrops. A second field will be planted with one variety following winter annual trials.

An August Hemp Field Day is being planned. Stay tuned!

Farm Activity Checklist

March:

- Order fertilizer
- Monitor forecrop growth
- Finalize planting week
- Plan to terminate forecrop

April:

- Hemp seed arrives
- Monitor forecrop growth
- Terminate at 12 inches
- Rototill forecrop when dead
- 2nd light tillage pass 7-10 days after first pass

May:

- Broadcast pre-plant fertilizer
- 3rd light tillage pass 7-10 days after second pass
- Calibrate planter
- Plant hemp



Forecrops were terminated at about 12 inches tall in Mid-April. Temperatures were above 55 °F for several days.

What's happening on your farm?

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