

News Column for Use Week of 06/24/2019  
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### **Double Crop Options After Wheat**

With wheat harvest quickly approaching, many producers are considering double cropping as an option to help optimize production of the land after harvest. Producers, more often than not, are seeking options to enhance the return on investment from the land. While return on investment is important, other aspects of a double cropping system should be taken into consideration when choosing a crop to plant: improvement of soil health, soil moisture retention, weed suppression, and forages for livestock are just a few examples.

As alluded to earlier, producers are often looking for a way to maximize profitability. Typically, soybean planting is often the first option producers consider when a sufficient return on investment is desired. However, it is important to consider several factors before planting soybeans. One of the first considerations should be soybean maturity. Although seemingly counterintuitive, soybeans should have a similar maturity rating to those being planted during a typical planting period. Planting soybeans with too early of a maturity rating will more than likely result in shorter soybeans with pods closer to the ground; while planting soybeans with too late of a maturity rating increases the risk that the beans may not mature before frost, especially if long periods of drought inhibit growth.

For producers with livestock looking for an additional feed source, following wheat up with a summer annual forage (i.e. forage sorghum and sudan) can be a viable option. Earlier plantings tend to produce more tonnage, especially if the crop is able to attain adequate rainfall in August. Later plantings tend to struggle with drying down and may want to be considered solely for silage. In continuation to forages, producers wanting a multipurpose option – that can be used as a forage – may want to consider planting a cover crop. In addition to serving as a forage, cover crops can aid in amending soil health and enhancing soil moisture retention over an extended period of time.

For more information on double crops after wheat harvest, please contact Tyler Husa, Crop Production Agent in the Concordia Extension Office by calling (785) 243-8185 or emailing [thusa@ksu.edu](mailto:thusa@ksu.edu).