

Canola/Rapeseed

Brassica napus



Photo by Jörg Hempel

Season type: Winter annual

Uses

Compaction reduction	G	Attract beneficials	G
Residue persistence	G	Nitrogen scavenger	VG
Erosion control	VG	P&K scavenger	F
Weed control	VG	Forage quality	G
Nematode control	VG		

E=Excellent; VG=Very Good; G=Good; F=Fair; P=Poor/None

Seeding rate: 5–10 lb/acre drilled; 8–14 lb/acre broadcast.

Planting date: September to early October. Soil temperatures between 45°F and 85°F. Plants should reach 6-8 leaves before a killing frost.

Production

Residue: 2,000 to 5,000 lb/acre.

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Forage rape

Surface residue

Brassicas grow rapidly in the autumn, producing large amounts of biomass, good for choking out weeds.

Rapeseeds prefer well-drained soils with pH between 5.5 and 8.0.

Pest and weed control

Biotoxins produced by brassicas when they decompose are toxic against many soilborne pathogens and pests, including insects, nematodes, and weeds. Canola has lower amounts than other rapeseeds.

Natural rapeseed oils are used as industrial lubricants. The term *Canola* (**CAN**adian **OIL** **L**ow **A**cid) is now used generally for all edible rapeseed oils, which have lower amounts of glucosinolates and erucic acid. Forage rape is used for animal grazing.

Some cultivars can survive winter temperatures down to 10°F.



Canola – Photo by NDSU Ag Comm

Attract beneficials

Canola flowers attract honeybees and hoverflies that are predators of aphids.

Brassicas can be grown in mixtures with winter grains.



Adapted from *Managing Cover Crop Profitably 3rd Edition*



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Research
Service

Conservation Systems
Fact Sheet No. 04r
January 2016

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