**What is the nutrient availability of the cover crop biomass?**

Comments from Lance Gunderson regarding the cover crop routine biomass analysis attached.

With the C:N ratios being this low (not necessarily a bad thing), I would expect to get 75% of the nutrients out of each of these cover crops for next season.  If we are very dry over winter and into late spring, then drop this off to around 40-50%.

The root mass contains a lot of value, but it is hard to estimate since we cannot dig up the roots completely to account for an accurate biomass of this portion.  Secondly, the percentage of biomass the roots make up compared to the shoots varies by species and growth stage of each species.  In other words, we don't extrapolate or guess on our analysis when it comes to the roots.  Therefore, we are using a fairly conservative approach even though most producers would consider this aggressive.  I know Ron would tell me that we are underestimating the amount of nutrients available by not accounting for the roots, and with very active soils like his, he is correct.  If you want to factor in the roots, then I suggest saying that the roots make up about 30-40% of the total biomass.  So, if we had 1000lbs of above ground biomass, then we would say we have another 400-650 lbs of roots or a total plant biomass of 1400-1650 lbs/A.  I then assume that we have the same proportion of nutrients tied up there as we do in the above ground portion.  Again, not necessarily accurate, but closer to true if the plants are not at seeding/maturity.

Just my 2 cents.

Thanks,

Lance

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