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NEW COVER CROP INTRODUCED



AGRINEWS PHOTOS/MARTHA BLUM

CoverCress is developed from the native pennycress. These three plants show what the crop looks like as it grows in the spring. This new crop provides a cover crop for fields as well as a cash crop for oil and meal. CoverCress is harvested with a combine using a small seed setting.

Cash in on cover crop

Plant CoverCress after corn harvest

By Martha Blum
AGRINEWS PUBLICATIONS

CHICAGO — CoverCress is a cover crop that farmers also can harvest and market as a cash crop.

"Soil health is an investment that you make for the long term and we have something that delivers that and creates earnings," said Jerry Steiner, CEO of CoverCress Inc.

"We hear tremendous conversation about the benefits of cover crops, but yet they're only adopted in the Midwest on a small amount of area," Steiner

said during a presentation at the CSS 2018 & Seed Expo, organized by the American Seed Trade Association.

"I believe the fundamental reason comes down to economics because it is difficult when times are tight to make an investment for the long term in soil health," he said. "We want to break that."

Farmers in the Midwest manage a very productive corn and soybean rotation in their fields.

"But it has something unnatural, half of the year the land



Steiner

is bare and you don't see that in nature," Steiner said. "Our crop grows in a different season of the year, during different weather variables and adds diversity."

CoverCress is developed from the native pennycress.

"We love the agronomy of this plant because it is very winter tolerant and it's the first thing to grow in the spring," Steiner said. "We used gene editing to change the composition, so we can plant something that looks like pennycress, harvest something that looks like canola and the oil and meal have real value in the marketplace."

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