



PRESS RELEASE

Area Producers Participate in Cover Crop Demonstrations

September 19, 2022 – Producers across the Eastern part of Nebraska are taking part in cover crop demonstrations to improve soil health that can lead to water quality and water quantity improvements. The Highboy Cover Crop Interseeding Project (HiCCIP), received funding and assistance from Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy, and University of Nebraska Extension.

The overall goal of the HiCCIP is to establish enough cover crop growth prior to winter dormancy, and to monitor the time and labor required to manage cover crops. A high clearance Hagie sprayer was purchased and modified specifically for this project to be used at the plantings across Eastern Nebraska. The machine features a high clearance to go through tall corn late in the growing season.

During August and September, ten producers across the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District (NRD) planted a variety of cover crops. In total, almost thirty producers signed up for participation across the Lower Platte North NRD, Lower Platte South NRD, and Upper Big Blue NRD. Producers chose between cereal rye, or a mix of cereal rye, turnip and rapeseed.

“Producers picked what they felt would work best in their operations. Cereal rye was chosen most often when producers were considering grazing this winter,” stated Daryl Anderson, Water Resources Manager for the Lower Platte North NRD. The seed mixes were selected to assist in breaking up hardpans in the soil. The hardpan is a dense layer of soil, usually two to four feet below the topsoil layer.

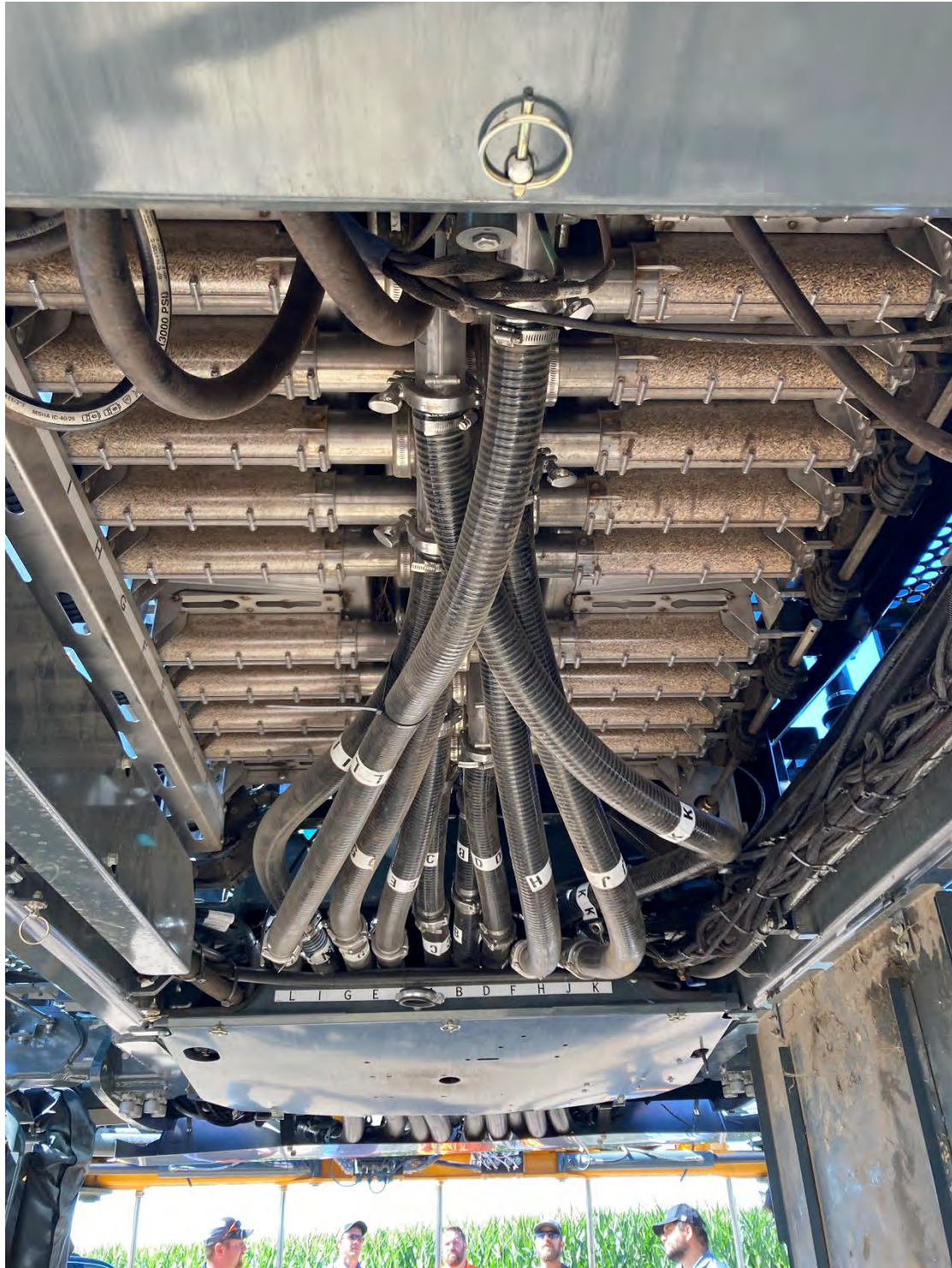
The first year of the project was designed for showing how the interseeding process works. Field site demonstrations were held at multiple sites for the public to observe the machine, ask questions with experts, and take a ride to see how the cover crop seeds were planted. The fields will be monitored by UNL Extension staff and Lower Platte North NRD staff. During the cover crop’s growing season, seed establishment, germination rates, soil moisture, and soil sampling for residual nitrogen will be monitored.

For more information about this project, please visit go.unl.edu/highboycovercrops. Producers within the Lower Platte North NRD who are interested in implementing cover crops on their field can contact Daryl Anderson, Water Resources Manager at 402-443-4675.

Video can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/Zg_AqTAWAh0



HiCCIP_1 Preparing the Highboy for a demonstration near Schuyler, NE.



Panels were opened underneath the modified Highboy to show the chambers filled with seed.



Producers viewing the chambers full of seed.



Katie Pekarek, UNL Extension shows how tiny some of the seeds are (rapeseed shown).