

Cover Crops in Irrigated Pecans

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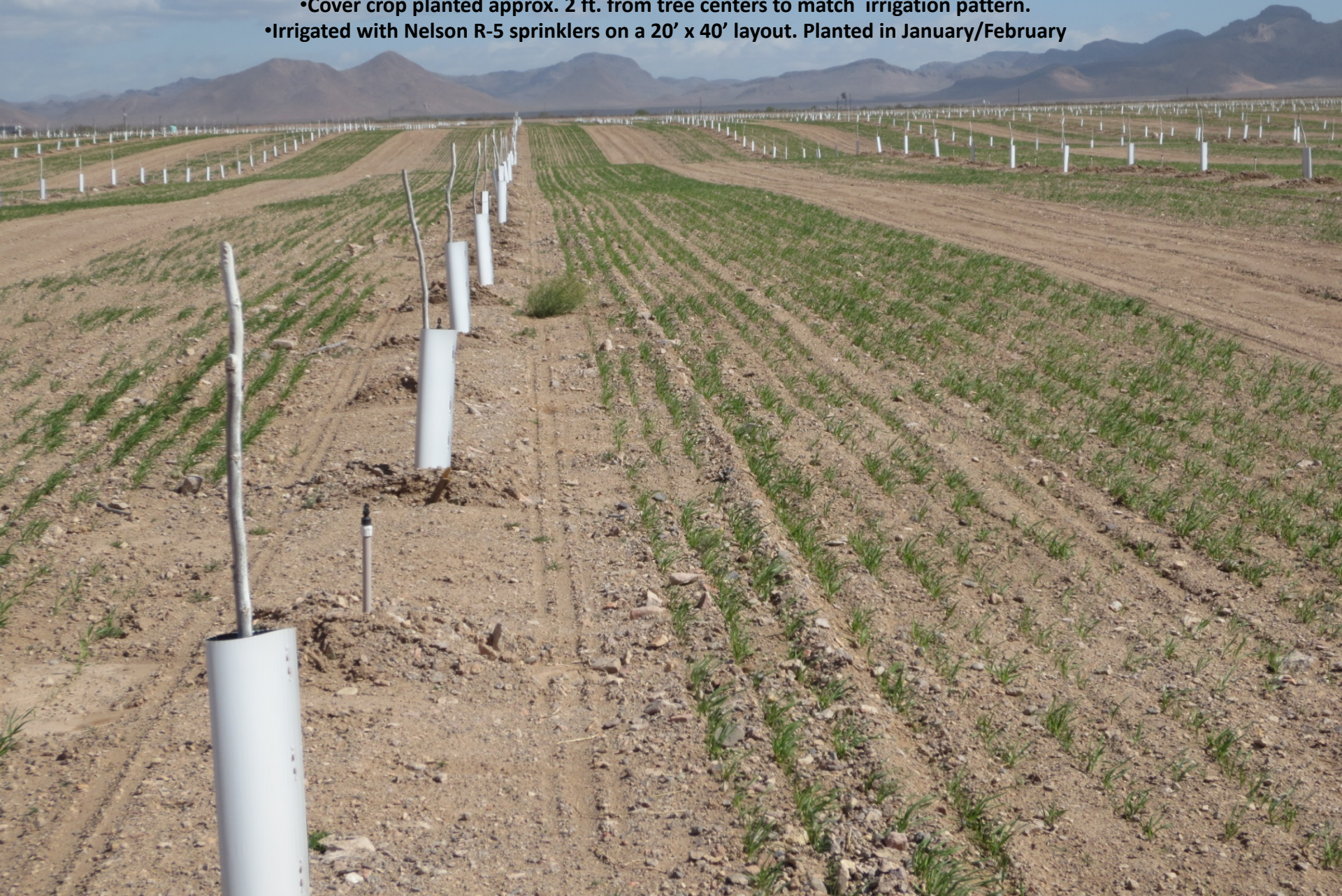
Why Plant Cover Crops?

1. Promote soil stability & increase soil organic matter.
2. Cover crop roots act as a “bio chisel” to improve water penetration.
3. Keeps irrigation & rain water from running off sloped fields.
4. No tillage – only tree row herbicide spraying & mowing operations.
5. Reduces dust & wind damage in April/May/June.



Cover Crop Following New Tree Planting

- 35 lb./ac. mix of: Daikon Radish (10 lb.), Triticale(10 lb.), “Solar” Barley (10lb.), Chinese Mustard (2.5) & Red Clover(2.5).
 - Cover crop planted approx. 2 ft. from tree centers to match irrigation pattern.
 - Irrigated with Nelson R-5 sprinklers on a 20’ x 40’ layout. Planted in January/February



5 - way cover crop on 1st leaf pecans



Cover Crop on New Trees – Summer

- Remaining crop stubble maintains soil stability & water retention.
- No tillage promotes growth of perennial clover and summer native grasses.
- Glufosinate and Paraquat for weed control in the immediate tree row centers.
- Organic matter levels are now 2.4%-3.2% after years of no-till & cover crops.



Cover crops do best with full coverage sprinkler irrigation and level basin flood systems. Cover crop stands are difficult to establish with drip irrigation. This is white & red clover no-till planted in 50 year old trees.





Buffalo Grass (buckhorn dactyloides) growing in larger trees. Warm season perennial grass that does well in the orchard. High organic matter producer. Good habitat for beneficial insects-lacewings/ladybugs. Plant 15 lb./ac. in June.

Buffalo Grass - Winter

Buffalo grass goes dormant for harvest & pruning
Leaves a nice surface for ground harvest and eliminates dust.
•Minimizes winter weed growth in the orchard.
Utilize Pindar GT & Prowl H2O to keep tree lines clean

