

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Senior Project by Justin Zahradka, Beginning Farmer

FFA Supervised Agricultural Experience Grant

- On January 8, 2011, I was awarded \$1,000 from the North Dakota FFA Foundation to help offset the costs of a farm lease, fuel and chemical to get 40 acres of land that was formerly in CRP ready for crop production in 2012. It was a great gift on my 17th birthday.





Goals of Project

- Prove cover crops are economically and environmentally friendly in NE ND.
- Gain data on livestock rates of gains on forage cover crops.
- Gain soil quality data for future programs.



Cutting and Raking

June 2011

**After securing a 10 year farm lease,
I was able to start haying.**





Baling and First Pass with Chisel Plow

We made 2,000 bales.



Tough Work





Plowing and Disking



Fertilizing and Broadcasting

July 22, 2011

Brad Brummond recommended 30 lbs. of nitrogen per acre. We spread the seed simultaneously.





Harrowing





Cover Crop Emerges

A total of 7+ inches of rain fell on the cover crop.



Haybet Barley, Sorghum-Sudan Grass,
Arvika Pea, Treated Sunflower,
Diakon Radish VNS, Purple Top Turnip





Cover Crop Growth After 1 Month

Radish





Field Demonstration

Walsh County Cover Crop Demonstration Project

Tour: Sept 14, 2011

Sponsored by:

**Walsh Co Three Rivers SCD
NDSU EXT and NRCS
ND SARE Program**





Demonstration Pit







Diamondback Moth





Pea



Sorghum Sudan Grass





Turnip



Sunflower



Electric Fence





Weighing In the Cattle

October 9, 2011

**23 cow/calf pairs and
6 heifers grazed for 33 days**









Exhibits at Walsh County Fair

October 18, 2011







November 1, 2011

Soil is alive.





Weighing Out the Cattle

Cows: -0.75lbs.

Heifers: 0.57lbs.

Steer Calves: 1.87 lbs.

Heifer Calves: 1.66 lbs.

November 11, 2011

61.77 lbs. X \$1.65.lb =

\$101.93/calf



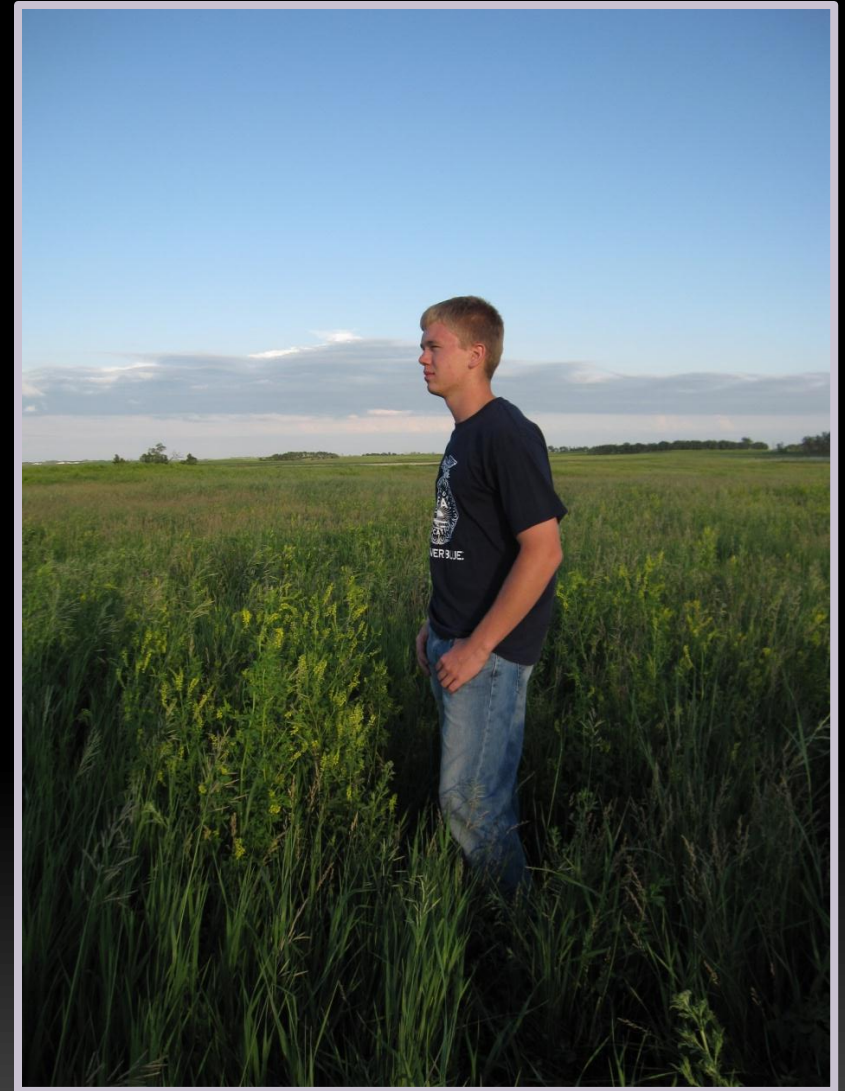
Ready for 2012



- I should be able to get into the field 7-10 days earlier this spring because cover crops absorb excess soil moisture.

Field of Dreams

- My dream is to successfully farm the 40 acres and add the family land to it. I will attend NDSU next fall to pursue a degree in Crop and Weed Sciences.



Thank You!

They say it takes a village to raise a child. As a Beginning Farmer, I know it takes many people and agencies to help us get started. Special thanks to all the people at NDSU Extension, the NRCS, Walsh County Three Rivers SCD, ND SARE Program, Farm Service Agency, FFA Foundation, 4-H, Park River Public Schools, North Valley Career-Tech Center, Kangas family, Bill Bata, Derreck Lundquist, and my family.

