

# **Evaluation of Intercrops for Snap Beans, Plateau Experiment Station, 2001**

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## **Interpretative Summary**

Production of snap beans was not greatly affected by the use of crimson clover or Kobe lespedeza intercrops. The use of intercrops provided good soil cover which should be useful in reducing erosion in snap bean production.

## **Introduction**

No-till production of snap beans has not been consistently successful in Tennessee. Some research trials have been very successful, but attempts to repeat the same trial have failed. Preparation of a nice smooth seedbed for planting snap beans can lead to erosion with the heavy rainfall levels in Tennessee. Since no-till has not been fully successful, intercropping trials have been conducted in recent years to evaluate crops and weed control for use with snap beans. Kobe lespedeza and crimson clover were selected as the most suitable intercrops for snap beans. Certain herbicides are labeled for legume intercrops and snap beans. An experiment was conducted at the Plateau Experiment Station at Crossville, TN in 2001 to evaluate performance of snap beans with intercrops.

## **Materials and Methods**

The site was prepared for planting using conventional tillage in early May. Fertilizer was broadcast at 300 lb/A of 15-15-15 before final disking on May 24. EPTC (Eptam) at 3 lb ai/A was applied PPI for weed control before final disking on May 24. Plots were direct seeded with 'Hialeah' beans on May 25. Plot size was two rows, 20 ft long and 160 seeds were planted per row. Rows were spaced 30 inches apart. Experimental plot design was a randomized complete block with four replications. Intercrops of crimson clover or Kobe lespedeza were seeded after planting on May 25. The conventional plots were cultivated on June 15. Esfenvalerate (Asana) was applied for insect control on June 15.

Plots were mechanically harvested on July 16. Plant height and width were recorded at harvest. The percentage of ground covered with vegetation was rated at harvest. A 2 lb sample of harvested pods was collected from each plot. The number of pod clusters was counted for each sample. The sample was separated into trash, broken, pin beans and marketable beans and the percentage of each was calculated. A sample of 25 whole pods was measured for length, and rated for smoothness and straightness. Ratings were on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being smooth and straight. An 85 gram sample of No. 4 sieve pods from each sample was measured for firmness using a TG4C Texture Gage. All data

were analyzed by analysis of variance methods, and means were separated by Duncan's multiple range tests at the 0.05 level of probability.

### **Results and Discussion**

Intercrops had little effect on production and plant growth of snap beans (Table 1). Soil cover percentage was higher with crimson clover than with Kobe lespedeza and was very low for the cultivated plots. It was noted that crimson clover was more vigorous than Kobe lespedeza and covered the soil much faster. Pod characteristics (Tables 2 and 3) were not greatly affected by the use of intercrops.

Weed control was not fully adequate with Eptam. Common Purselane was the only weed present in large numbers, and it developed in a good cover in the plots. Cultivation controlled purselane in the cultivated plots, but no control was proved in the plots planted in intercrops.

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This research represents one season's data and does not constitute recommendations. After sufficient data is collected over the appropriate number of seasons, final recommendations will be made through research and extension publications.