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Running title:

Ground predation pressure on artificial caterpillars

Abstract

We studied the impact that two agro-ecological service crops (ASC), vetch and barley, and two different ASC termination techniques (using a roller crimper or green manure) had on predation pressure in an organic vegetable system. We compared these two ASC termination techniques with a biodegradable plastic mulch, commonly used to control weeds in vegetable organic systems, over two consecutive growing seasons (2014-2015).

Predation pressure was evaluated by means of artificial caterpillars made of green plasticine. Attack marks left on them were assigned to predators including chewing insects, birds and mammals. The frequencies of attack were significantly correlated with the activity density of