

# Noxious and Invasive Weed Update

## Plant Protection and Weed Control

*Spring 2017*

### Special points of interest:

- Always read the label when buying seed. It will tell you, among other things, how much of the seed is expected to grow, what type and how many weed seeds are included and how much dirt and other non-seed or "inert" material is in the bag.
- Giant hogweed grows 15 feet tall and has flower heads that look like wild carrot except they are 3 feet in diameter.

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## Wildfire Relief Hay

The recent wildfires in Kansas have resulted in the loss of forage for cattle and other livestock. In response, thoughtful ranchers from around Kansas and the country have donated thousands of bales of hay to help those in need.



Those Kansans receiving these emergency relief bales should be aware that they may contain noxious

or invasive species, even if they came from elsewhere in Kansas. Therefore, it is very important to monitor the area where these bales are fed or stored for the appearance of any new or unusual species. Livestock feeding on this hay could spread invasive

weeds to other areas after feeding on infested hay.

If you do see any species of plants or insects you do

not recognize or know to be a problem, contact your county agent or county noxious weed director for help in controlling them before they become established or start to spread. The sooner you control these or any other noxious or invasive species, the easier and less expensive it will be. Some of the species to watch for include, but are not limited to, red imported fire ants and scotch thistle from the south and spotted knapweed, giant hogweed and leafy spurge from the north. Those bales received from other Kansas counties should be monitored for noxious weeds as well as teasel, spotted knapweed and old world bluestems.

## New Program Joins PPWC



The Plant Protection and Weed Control program (PPWC) has inherited a new program. The Agricultural Seed program has been moved from the Agricultural Commodities Assurance Program (ACAP). The Agricultural Seed program is charged with the admin-

istration of the state seed law (K.S.A. 2-1415). This law covers grass, legume, forage, cereal and fiber crop seeds and requires, among other things, the proper labeling of these seeds when offered for sale because important labeling information like germination and purity guarantees help farmers decide how to plant the seed to determine crop yield. If seed does not meet or exceed the guarantees, the farmer may experience less than expected crop yields and suffer eco-

nomically.

The program itself is based in Manhattan. The field portion of the program currently consists of 5 inspectors across the state who will visit seed dealers throughout their areas to conduct label inspections to ensure that all products being offered to the public are compliant with the seed law. They will also be collecting random samples of this seed to further ensure the information on the labels is correct.

## Integrated Weed Management: Part 11 - Restoration

Now that we have covered the control options of Integrated Weed Management, it is time to discuss what to do next. Once the noxious or invasive weeds are eliminated, what is left behind is often degraded, altered or bare land which is ripe for reinfestation by the same or different weeds.



To prevent this from happening, it is important to restore the formerly infested areas to help repair the damage caused by the previous invasion and return it to the native, pro-

ductive and healthy condition it was in before the weeds took over. Not only will restoration help prevent the reinfestation of invasives, but it can help improve wildlife habitat, increase forage production and improve land values.

Restoration of these areas consists mostly of re-establishing native or desirable species and can vary in the amount of time, effort and money spent. Active restoration involves seeding or drilling the desired species into the project area while passive restoration allows the desired species to reestablish themselves over time. If the invasive invasion was a small, isolated patch with native species thriving around it, passive restoration will be a good option but if you are fighting a larger infestation that has crowded out most of the desirable species, a more active approach will be necessary.



There is no one formula for knowing which approach to take or which species to reestablish in place of the invasives but a good rule of thumb is to work to get the land back to the same condition it was before the infestation.

For assistance, contact your local extension agent, the Kansas Native Plant Society or a registered seed dealer that specializes in native plant seeds.

## Control Corner: Cleaning Equipment

After a day of spraying weeds there is nothing better than unhooking the spray tank and heading home for dinner, right? Not really. Leaving the last of the herbicide in your tank can cause problems that you will regret later when you find the metal fittings and spray tips corroded, the hoses plugged and the pump clogged. These are only some of the issues you can avoid if you carefully clean out your spray tanks after every use. This includes everything from one gallon garden sprayers to nurse tanks.

Cleaning your tanks is usually as easy as filling them but, to be safe, read the label of each of the herbicides you applied to find out if there are special instructions for cleaning your tank because it is always important to follow the label instructions. If

there are no special instructions on the label, a good procedure to follow is to rinse the inside of the tank three times with fresh water each time. During each rinse, while the rinse



water is still in the tank, spray some of it through the hose back into the tank to flush out any residue.

Keep in mind the rinse water will have varying amounts of herbicide in

it so be sure to keep it contained so it won't contaminate any ground or surface water or damage crops, flowers or grass. Once you are finished cleaning the tank, spray the rinse water on the same field you applied the herbicide to.

While you have the hose out, remember to clean the containers the herbicide came in. Triple rinse those as well and add that rinse water to what is already in the tank. Puncturing the containers is a good way to ensure that they won't be used for any other purpose.

Always remember and don't ever forget, when using any type of pesticide, always read and follow the label directions. The label is the law.



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Plant Protection and Weed Control staff work to ensure the health of the state's native and cultivated plants by excluding or controlling destructive pests, diseases and weeds. Staff examine and analyze pest conditions in crop fields, rangelands, greenhouses and nurseries. Action taken to control potential infestations of new pests, whether they are insects, plants diseases or weeds, is beneficial to the economy and the environment.

**Our mission is to:**

- Exclude or control harmful insects, plant diseases, and weeds;
- Ensure Kansas plants and plant products entering commerce are free from quarantined pests;
- Provide customers with inspection and certification services.

## Invasive Species Spotlight

### Yellow Flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*)

While most iris species are desirable ornamental plants and are quite good at behaving themselves and staying in the gardens in which they were planted, yellow flag irises are not. Native to the wetlands of Europe, Asia and Africa, they were imported as an ornamental back in the 1700s and have now invaded almost every state in the nation, including Kansas.

If not planted in a garden setting, this plant prefers moist to wet soil close to if not in wetlands, streams,

lakes and ponds. Like other irises, the yellow flag is a perennial but it does not develop a bulb and it spreads vegetatively by sending out rhizomes, or underground stems, that will sprout new plants. It also produces several hundred seeds every year. These seeds develop in a pod in late summer through early fall and have a built-in air pocket that allows them to float downstream until they get deposited on firm ground where they germinate and develop new infestations.

The yellow to cream-colored flowers are typical of beardless irises and are 3 to 4 inches wide with a



darker patch at the front of the petals and brownish veining around this patch. The dark green leaves are flat and sword-shaped with a raised midrib.

To control an infestation, you can dig out a smaller infestation, just make sure to remove all of the rhizomes or you will have to start over again next year. Mowing or tilling will not work because the rhizomes will quickly regrow and it is not a good idea to use these methods in wet areas anyway because it will damage the soil and you will probably get stuck in the mud. A glyphosate product that is labeled for use in aquatic situations is your best bet for controlling large infestations.