

Overgrazing leads to weeds and little forage.



Herbicides Available for Hayfields & Pastures

Herbicide	Features
2,4-D	Annuals & some perennials. Anytime application. Be careful about volatility
Banvel	Annuals & some perennials. Anytime application. Be careful about volatility. Can be mixed w/ 2,4-D
Cimarron Plus®	Broad spectrum of control, good in spring or fall, inexpensive, slow acting, graze immediately, hard on fescue
Grazon® P+D*	Broad spectrum of control, soil residual for longer control, Non volatile, flexible grazing restrictions *restricted use herbicide
Milestone™	Broad spectrum of control, soil residual for longer control, low volatility, no grazing restrictions
Forefront® R&P	Broad spectrum of control, soil residual for longer control, low volatility, no grazing restrictions
Remedy®	Good brush and perennial control
Crossbow®	Good brush and perennial control, flexible grazing restrictions

For complete information, please contact your Augusta Co-Op field representative, local store, or the fertilizer department. Custom application service is available.



Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc.

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(540)885-1265

Branch Stores

18 Depot Ln
Weyers Cave, VA 24486
(540)234-9275

5788 N. Lee Hwy
Fairfield, VA 24435
(540)377-6798

8173 Scottsville Rd
Scottsville, VA 24590
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www.augustacoop.com

Weed Management in Pastures

by

The Augusta Co-Op Agronomy Team

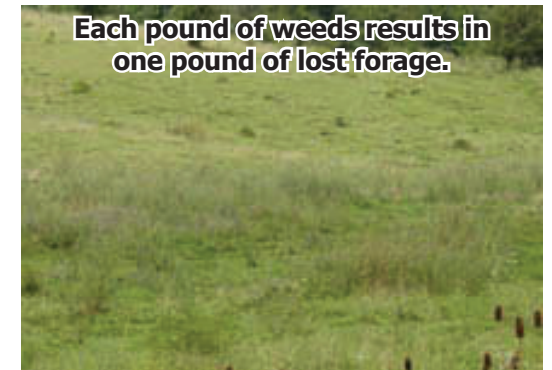
How Much Do Weeds Cost Us?

This is difficult to quantify, and not much research has been done to fully answer this question. However, the documentation that is available supports that for every one pound of weeds in a pasture, the production of desirable forage is reduced by a pound.

Let's look at this another way. If the surface area of a pasture is 25% weeds, production of desirable forages is automatically decreased by 25% in that pasture. Since pasture yields and hay crop yields are similar in the Valley, the same reduction of forage potential by the presence of weeds would also occur in hayfields.

Regardless of the species of animal grazing the acreage, good pastures provide the cheapest high quality feed for your livestock. Grass pastures and hayfields can produce up to 3-5 tons of dry hay equivalent forage, and legume based pastures should increase that yield potential by 20-25%. Therefore, improving pastures should be a top priority. Reducing weed competition needs to be a part of the pasture management system.

Each pound of weeds results in one pound of lost forage.



Weed Biology

Successful and economical management of weeds revolves around the understanding of weed biology. Knowing the biology of the weeds gives hints as to how best control them.

Basically, there are three types of weeds - annuals, biennials, and perennials. Annuals (chickweed, henbit, lambsquarter, pigweed, etc.) germinate and produce seed in the same year. Biennials (common burdock, bull thistle, wild carrot, etc.) complete their lifecycle in two years. Perennials complete their lifecycle in more than two years and can produce seed every year once firmly established.

Simple perennials spread primarily by seed (dandelions, plantains, etc.) Creeping perennials spread across pastures by vegetative means in addition to producing seed (Canada thistle, hemp dogbane, Virginia Creeper, etc.)

Biennials and perennials are the most competitive with desirable forage species and are also the most challenging to manage.

Forage Management Guidelines

(to get strong forage stands established and keep these stands in production for years)

Seedling Year

1. Weed free soil preparation
2. Soil test and fertilize
3. Optimize planting date
4. Use high quality seed
5. Don't graze too soon or too hard

Established Stands

1. Maximize forage crop's ability to compete
2. Overseed thin areas
3. Don't overgraze
4. Control pests - insects, pathogens, weeds

Weed Control Practices



Mechanical Control

Mowing

One of the first techniques of weed control is mowing or clipping of pastures. This serves a dual purpose - keep both the desirable forage species and weeds from producing a seed head or maturing.

Once a seed head is produced, each species has completed its life cycle. For weeds, they are harder to control once mature because of viable seed production plus root reserves have been restored for the next vegetative flush of growth.

Mowing twice, sometimes three times, annually is required to keep biennials and perennials on the defensive and easier to control.

In addition, mowing keeps the desirable forage species stimulated to grow and provide competition for weeds. Generally speaking, leaving a pasture stubble of 3-4 inches is best for most pasture species.

Hand or Hoe

Using the old "hand pulling" technique of cutting weeds out with a hoe or shovel is also very effective for individual weeds or small patches of weeds. However, we all know the limitations of this practice - finding someone to do it.

Chemical Weed Control

After using the integrated approach of cultural and mechanical weed control methods, herbicides are often necessary to complete the weed control program.

By using our knowledge of weed biology, we can more effectively target the use of herbicides to control weeds.

Spring Application

For spring annuals, using herbicides soon after germination of these annual weeds is the best time to control them. Follow label recommendations as to the height of the weeds to help determine the rate of herbicide to apply.

Summer/Fall Application

For winter annuals (chickweed, henbit, etc) and weeds that germinate in late summer or fall, spraying soon after germination is the best time to control them with the least amount of herbicide.

For most biennials and perennials, the best time to apply herbicides is when the plants are most vulnerable. During late summer and early fall, biennials and perennials are trying to build up root reserves, so they stop vegetative growth and send nutritional resources to the roots. This provides a natural vascular system to send herbicides to roots also and further weaken the plants.

The bottom line is that **September-early October** application of herbicides on biennials and perennials in the best time to control them. Again, follow the label recommendations of the herbicide used.