



Got Thistles? Got Pigweed? Got Ironweed?



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION

**A 101 EXTENSION FACT-SHEET ON 3 COMMON PESTS
IN HAYFIELDS AND PASTURES**

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WHEN DOES EMERGENCE BEGIN?

- Emergence begins in mid to late spring when soil temperatures reach 55 degrees Fahrenheit and above.
- Growth begins from seed.
- An area may not have experienced a weed issue in the recent past, but suddenly does can be because seeds that are often “stored” in what is referred to as the seed bank in the ground, germinate under perfect conditions.

WHY ARE THISTLES, PIGWEED, AND IRONWEED UNDESIRABLE?

- Weeds reduce the quantity of the desirable forages in pastures and hay fields.
- Reduce forage quality & palatability in forage producing stands used for livestock feed.
- Unwanted weeds utilize nutrients that would otherwise be used for desirable forages and grasses.
- Weeds that account for more than 30% of a forage stand begin reducing stand and economic efficiencies.

HOW CAN I STOP THE GROWTH OF THESE WEEDS?

- Treat with an herbicide.
- Mature plants may not be controlled by herbicide treatment due to age. The younger the plant, the more successful treatment will be.
- Thistles will respond better when treated with herbicides in the rosette stage.
- Plan to treat before plants approach seeding to prevent spread of seed to reduce future growth.
- Bush hogging can spread the weed seed to areas not yet affected.
- Consider bush hogging before seeds become mature to prevent spread if herbicide treatment is not utilized.



PRE-EMERGENCE OR POST EMERGENCE HERBICIDE?

- Approved post-emergence herbicides should be utilized after the plant has emerged.
- Approved post-emergence herbicides can be useful when spot spraying weeds.
- Approved pre-emergence herbicides can be useful to prevent the emergence of certain weeds in forage stands if weed seed is in seed bank in the soil.
- Remember timing is important when deciding whether to utilize a post or pre-emergence herbicide.
- Consult your local extension professional when searching for an effective herbicide to utilize.

OTHER TIPS TO REMEMBER

- Read & follow all label directions before mixing/applying herbicides.
- Calibrate spraying implements to ensure proper herbicide application.
- Clean spray equipment properly after use to prevent contamination of future uses.
- Follow label directions for disposal of empty pesticide/herbicide containers.
- Utilize all required safety equipment and follow mixing directions on the labels. Herbicides can be dangerous if not used correctly.
- Choose the correct herbicide for use on the targeting weed. Different weeds respond differently to certain herbicides.
- Consider livestock grazing and haying withdrawal times.
- Store pesticides properly.
- For a full list of important tips when using pesticides contact your local extension office.

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