

Control Weeds

Weeds spread quickly, so look for new weed patches on your property regularly. Act immediately to treat them by using one or more of the weed control practices listed below. Team up with neighbors to improve effectiveness. Be sure to correctly identify weeds for proper control. Remember, weed control alone is not enough. It is also necessary to modify the practices that caused weeds to become established in the first place!

LEARN TO SPOT WEEDS BEFORE THEY...

- Choke out desirable plants
- Reduce the productivity of your pasture and natural areas
- Spread RAPIDLY!
- Affect the health of your livestock

PREVENTION

Good land management and proper fertility will help keep desirable vegetation healthy and weeds under control. Buy quality clean hay, straw, and bedding. Look for weeds on your property and remove them promptly. Well managed grazing will inhibit weed establishment and encourage the healthy development of pasture grasses.

LIVESTOCK TRANSPORT

Because livestock and wildlife can easily carry and spread weed seeds on their coats or in their feces, avoid moving livestock from a weedy area to a weed-free area. Some weed species, if eaten, will make livestock sick.

MECHANICAL CONTROL

Mow weeds as needed before they go to seed. Pull small weed patches and weeds near streams by hand.



DID YOU KNOW?

Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) is an invasive weed that has become increasingly common in pastures and hayfields. This non-native weedy grass thrives in shady areas and along forest edges. Contact your local Extension office for treatment options.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

Herbicides can harm natural resources if used incorrectly, but are effective when applied in the right amounts and at the proper stage of plant growth.

If you hire a professional applicator, he/she must be licensed and certified by the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Regulation Section. Trained personnel are issued identification cards from the Department and the business license number must be displayed on the service vehicle. Call 410-841-5710 or visit egov.maryland.gov/mda/pesticides to search a database of licensed companies and certified pesticide applicators.

If you are a do-it-yourselfer and decide to apply herbicides to control weeds:

- Ask your local Extension office for recommendations on herbicides for your problem.
- Buy only the amount of herbicide that you need, for the current weed problem.
- Read and follow all label instructions.
- Wear protective clothing specified on the label.
- Keep herbicides away from waterways.







- Do not spray in the morning when bees are active.
- Handle and mix all herbicides on a concrete slab to protect groundwater resources.
- Contain and clean up spills immediately.
- Be sure herbicides will not reach and kill desirable trees and shrubs.
- It is best to keep horses out of pastures when applying herbicides.
- Contact your county's Extension office or hazardous waste disposal program for information on proper disposal of unwanted herbicides.

MARYLAND NOXIOUS WEEDS

The Maryland Noxious Weed Control Law requires landowners to eradicate or control weeds designated as noxious on all types of land including:

- Johnsongrass
- Musk Thistle
- Shattercane
- Plumeless Thistle
- Canadian Thistle
- Bull Thistle
- Check with your local Extension office for more information.

SOME COMMON WEEDS THAT ARE TOXIC TO HORSES

Plant Species	Poisonous Parts	Poison Symptom
 EASTERN BLACK NIGHTSHADE (<i>Solanum ptychanthum</i>)	Green berries and leaves	Marked thirst, diarrhea, loss of appetite, inability to stand, irregular gait, coma
 BUTTERCUPS (<i>Ranunculus species</i>)	Fresh leaves and flowers	Excessive salivation, decreased appetite, colic, diarrhea
 POISON HEMLOCK (<i>Conium maculatum</i>)	All parts, especially leaves	Nervousness, twitching of muscles, salivation, lack of coordination, dilation of pupils, paralysis, birth defects, death
 WHITE SNAKEROOT (<i>Ageratina altissima</i>)	Leaves and stems	Marked trembling of skeletal muscles, lack of coordination, general body weakness, constipation, inability to swallow or stand
 PURPLE MINT (<i>Perilla frutescens</i>)	Leaves, stems, and flowers	The affected animal stands away from the herd, usually with its head down, breathing very hard and loudly, usually with froth around the mouth and nose; pneumonia, death
 WILD CHERRY (<i>Prunus serotina</i>)	Wilted leaves and young twigs	Nervousness, rapid and labored breathing, trembling or jerking muscles, blue color of mouth lining, bright red venous blood, bloating, bitter almond type odor in rumen gas, convulsions, and coma

Keep in mind that when sprayed with herbicides, wilting plants can be very tasty to horses. If you suspect that your horse has eaten a toxic plant, contact your veterinarian immediately for an emergency visit.



The leaves, buds and flowers of the hydrangea are toxic to horses. Do not plant too close to the fence or where horses can eat them.

BEWARE OF CERTAIN LANDSCAPE PLANTS

There are several common flowers, ornamental landscape plants, and trees that are poisonous to horses. Do not plant these species too close to the fence or where horses can eat them. For more information on plants that are toxic to horses, contact your local Extension office. If you suspect that your horse has eaten a toxic plant, contact your veterinarian immediately.

- Azaleas and Rhododendrons
- Black Locust
- Boxelder Maple
- Buckeye
- Cherry
- Clover (alsike, red and white)
- Daffodils
- Foxglove
- Hydrangea
- Milkweed
- Mountain Laurel
- Oaks
- Red Maple
- Tall Fescue
- Yews



LEARN MORE...

Go to: mda.maryland.gov/HOW or call the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Weed Protection Section at 410-841-5920.