

Pasture Weed Control

Weeds are detrimental in pastures for a variety of reasons. Reason one is that livestock (goats are the exception) only graze broadleaf weeds for short periods unless forced to the task. Secondly, weeds steal nutrients away from more productive grasses and forbs, reducing their forage production. Broadleaf weeds, such as ragweed, bitter sneeze weed and pig weed, are common pasture problems. Weeds grab a foothold in pastures that are weak in condition from stresses such as overgrazing and drought or a combination of the two.

Chemical control of broadleaf weeds, utilizing herbicides, is generally considered the most cost effective and simplest means of weed control. Most broadleaf weeds in eastern Oklahoma can be controlled with the herbicide 2,4-D amine. 2,4-D amine applied at the rate of a pint to a quart per acre in early May, will control most broadleaf weeds. Two rules of thumb to remember about weed control are 1. Optimum control for most weeds will occur when weeds are small and actively growing and 2. For each pound of weeds you control, you'll produce a pound or more of grass.

Herbicides, such as 2,4-D amine that control weeds can also be damaging to vegetable crops, grapes, legumes and ornamental plants. Whenever using a herbicide, be sure to read and follow label instructions, beware of wind and potential herbicide drift problems. Sprayers should be calibrated prior to use so recommended application rates are applied and nozzles that produce a droplet spray rather than a mist should be utilized to reduce drift.

For further information on herbicide control of weeds in pasture, contact the Tulsa County OSU Extension Office at 918/746-3725.