

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICIAL CONTROL METHODS FOR
BUR RAGWEED

Ambrosia grayii (A. Nelson) Shinnery
Revised May 20, 2020

DESCRIPTION

Bur ragweed is a native, erect, perennial forb, 1-2 feet tall, that reproduces by underground root-stocks and seeds. Stems are usually branching from the base and covered with fine, woolly hairs that give the plant a silvery-gray to purplish-white appearance. The leaves are usually alternate rarely opposite toward the base of the stem), broadly ovate, pinnately 3-5-parted or entire, long-petioled, and dusty greenish-gray. The central lobe of the leaves is usually much larger than the lateral lobes. Male and female flowers are borne in separate heads, with male heads, drooping, about ¼ inch in diameter, and produced in terminal racemes, and female heads, mostly solitary in the leaf axils, 2-flowered, and less than ¼ inch in diameter. The 1-seeded fruits are bur-like, 1/8-1/4-inch-long, and bear stout, straight or hooked spines that are 1/16-1/8 inch long. Flowering and fruiting September-frost.

PREVENTION OF SPREAD

The Noxious Weed Law (K.S.A. 2-1313a et. seq.) requires all landowners to control the spread of and to eradicate bur ragweed on all lands owned or supervised by them. Methods used for control must prevent both the production of viable seed and destroy the plant's ability to reproduce by vegetative means. Infestation sites must be monitored after control methods have been accomplished to ensure that dormant seeds in the seedbank do not germinate and establish new infestations.

BUR RAGWEED CONTROL PRACTICES

Bur ragweed control means that both the roots and the flowers must be destroyed. Because bur ragweed is a perennial, with the exception of herbicide applications, one or more of the following methods must be used together to control bur ragweed.

Cultural Control

Cultural weed control involves land and vegetation management techniques used to prevent the establishment or control the spread of noxious weeds.

Frequent surveys of fence lines, roadway, ditches and other susceptible areas for new infestations and the quick removal of any new plants will prevent bur ragweed from becoming established.

Mechanical Control

Mechanical weed control involves the physical removal of all parts or just the reproductive parts of weeds.

As a perennial species, bur ragweed is difficult to control mechanically.

Controlling bur ragweed with cultivation would require tillage three to four inches deep every 14 to 21 days annually to deplete the seedbank. Following this time period, the area should be regularly policed for new seedlings which can be killed by further cultivation. When using this method, it is important to clean bur ragweed roots and root fragments from equipment before entering uninfested areas of the field or other fields to prevent the spread of bur ragweed.

Current residue requirements for cropland would not allow the excessive amounts of tillage needed to control bur ragweed. It is also not practical to clean cultivate over a two-year period because of the resulting wind and water erosion or loss of income due to no crop returns.

Chemical Control

The following herbicides may be used for cost-share with landowners. Other products labeled and registered for use on this noxious weed in Kansas may be used in accordance with label directions but are not available for cost-share. Be sure to follow all label directions and precautions. For additional information consult the most recent edition of the KSU publication of "Chemical Weed Control for Field Crops, Pastures, Rangeland, and Noncropland".

Any two or more of the herbicides listed below may be available for cost-share as a pre-mix or a tank mix if allowed on the respective labels. Contact your county weed program for availability.

Herbicide	Mode of Action
2,4-D LV Ester	4
aminopyralid	4
dicamba	4
florpyrauxifen-benzyl	4
picloram	4

Biological Control

Biological control refers to the deliberate application of a living organism to control the spread of weeds. These agents will not eradicate their host plant, therefore other control methods must be used in addition to the use of biological control agents as part of an integrated pest management strategy. The importation of biological control agents is regulated by USDA-APHIS and is allowed by permit only.

There are no biological control agents available for bur ragweed.