KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICIAL CONTROL METHODS FOR SERICEA LESPEDEZA

Lespedeza cuneata (Dum. Cours.) G. Don

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DESCRIPTION

Sericea lespedeza is a shrubby-looking perennial forb, 2-5 feet tall with many branching stems from a stout, woody, branched taproot. It is native to Asia. The leaves, each with three ¼-1-inch long leaflets, are crowded along the stems. The leaflets are wedge- or club-shaped. Two types of flowers are produced individually or in small clusters along the stems: showy, mostly cross-pollinated flowers are ¼ inch long and cream-colored with purple markings; Self-pollinated flowers are smaller and less showy. Fruits from both types of flowers are tan to brown, one-seeded pods 1/8 - ¼ inches long. Flowering August-frost; 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 sericea lespedeza 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.

SERICEA LESPEDEZA CONTROL PRACTICES

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

Cultural Control

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

The use of sheep or goats to graze sericea lespedeza may be used on young plants early in the season. Two or more treatments are necessary each season. Repeat grazing each year to deplete the seedbank and provide control.

Controlled burning of grasslands infested with sericea lespedeza in late August through September will kill the above-ground portion of the plant, including flowers and seeds which are produced at that time of year, preventing the plants from reproducing sexually. It will also encourage seed in the seedbank to germinate. Juvenile plants are susceptible to winter kill.

Frequent surveys of fence lines, roadway, ditches and other susceptible areas for new infestations and the quick removal of any new plants will prevent sericea lespedeza 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, sericea lespedeza is difficult to control mechanically.

Although not as effective as late season burning, because the mown plants are not removed and the soil is not heated allowing for the dormant seeds in the seedbank to germinate, repeated mowing in the flower bud stage should reduce the vigor of sericea lespedeza.

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
aminopyralid	4
chlorsulfuron	2
fluroxypyr	4
metsulfuron methyl	2
picloram	4
triclopyr	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 sericea lespedeza.