

Hitting Back at Sericea

There are many characteristics of sericea lespedeza that allow it to thrive in grasslands. It's ability to produce a tremendous amount of seed – and for that seed to lay dormant for a time before sprouting – has resulted in large seed banks that will persist for years to come. There are no known biological controls to keep it at bay. Herbicide programs can be successful, but will need to be repeated. It's no wonder it's one of our most troublesome noxious weeds. Here are some management tips from KSU Rangeland Management Specialist, Dr. Walt Fick.

Identification is a key first step in a control program. Sericea is a perennial legume with trifoliate leaves. These leaves are club or wedge shaped, lining a stem (vegetative now, more woody later...) that is typically about three feet tall – or taller. Blooming starts in August with white to cream colored flowers exhibiting a purple 'throat'. Seed will be produced in September.

Mechanical control options can be successful in combination with chemical control efforts. Grazing with goats (four to five goats per acre of sericea) can help reduce seed production. Frequent mowing in mid-late July is an option, as long as it doesn't damage desirable plants. Herbicide application four to six weeks later help in increasing control.

Work using prescribed burning has shown it can be a remedy. Spring burns increase seed germination, requiring in-season herbicide applications to reduce sericea levels. Fall burns (August/early September) have been found to nearly eliminate seed production.

Herbicide programs also provide good results. Early season applications on vegetative stage sericea with triclopyr containing products (PastureGard HL/Remedy) work well. Products containing metsulfuron are more effective in late summer when sericea is actively blooming. Broadcast or spot applications are both effective when applied according to label directions.

For further information on product names/rates/etc..., request or pick up a copy of the 2019 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide available from your local Extension Office.

Tailgate Talk II

Sericea Lespedeza and many other pasture/range weeds will be part of our Tailgate Talk II scheduled for Wednesday evening, June 26th at 5:30. Hosted by Perry Ranch, we'll again be out in the pasture, this time northwest of Oskaloosa (1/4 mile west of the intersection of Fairview and 106th Rd.). We'll start with a

light meal and then talk Brush & Weed Control as well as Fences – Physical & Psychological. RSVP by Tuesday, June 25th to the Oskaloosa Office of the Meadowlark Extension District @ (785) 863-2212 or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu .