Many of you reading this article know that we have glyphosate- (trade names – Roundup, Touchdown, and many generics) resistant horseweed across the state. While pockets of glyphosate-resistant horseweed plants were first identified in 2000, this plant spread across the entire Eastern Shore within a matter of 3 years. Now, Southern Maryland and many parts of the Piedmont area of the state are battling this plant.

Horseweed, also known as marestail or stickweed, has a peculiar germination period. On the Eastern Shore, over 50% of the plants will germinate in the fall. On the Western Shore, that is not the case. There, most of the plants will germinate during the months of April, May and June. While many growers may have sprayed Harmony or Harmony Extra overtop of their small grain crop, they did little to stop the growth and/or germination of this weed.

On the Eastern Shore, fall applications of products like 2,4-D will kill the initial flush of weeds that develop. On the Western Shore, with the lack of fall germination, growers do not have that luxury. Thus, knock-down programs are needed where no-till systems are in place. Small horseweed plants can be controlled with Gramoxone Inteon. However, many growers elect to add 2,4-D to their tank-mix for control of other emerged broadleaf weeds. While use of 2,4-D is not a problem where corn is planted, there are restrictions where soybeans are grown. In general, most growers will use one-half to one pint per acre of an ester formulation. Here, the preplant interval is 7 days between application and planting soybeans. This would be the same preplant interval whether you mix 2,4-D with Gramoxone Inteon or with a glyphosate formulation.

Recently, Liberty-Link soybeans and the herbicide Ignite 280 (formerly called Liberty herbicide) came into the marketplace. In my mind, this is a tremendous boon for growers who are faced with the challenges of controlling glyphosate-resistant horseweed. Ignite 280 is extremely active on emerged horseweed plants and can be used as a burndown herbicide in place of Gramoxone Inteon or glyphosate. Even in the situation where a grower used Gramoxone or glyphosate as the burndown product of choice, if Liberty-Link soybeans or Liberty-Link corn were planted, one could go in overtop of the crop with Ignite 280 and realize successful control. Keep in mind the label states that you use Ignite 280 as either a burndown product or as an in-crop postemergence application. We don’t want to see the same scenario develop where glyphosate was used as a burndown herbicide and as an overtop herbicide in the same season.
applications of glyphosate resulted in the emergence of weeds resistant to glyphosate. We do not want to see that happen with Ignite 280. Currently, the 2011 soybean label has changed to allow for multiple applications of Ignite 280. You can apply 29 to 36 ounces/acre as a burn-down and come back with 22 to 29 ounces/acre with an in-season application. Personally, I am not in favor of this current label. As stated, multiple applications of Ignite 280 may result in weeds resistant to this herbicide. This is something we want to avoid.

I’ve examined the use of Ignite 280 on the control of glyphosate-resistant horseweed for years. Throughout this time period, I have achieved 100% control of horseweed plants, even in worse case scenarios, where the plants were knee-high. However, in 2010, I saw regrowth from horseweed plants treated with Ignite 280. Why? I feel that a number of factors contributed to this regrowth. First of all, we had a very hot and dry spring for the most part. Under those conditions, plants will “harden up.” What does that mean? Under hot, dry conditions, plants want to survive. Their ultimate goal is to flower and set seed. In order to survive, they put their plant systems under alert in order to conserve water. While many things can occur, more often than not, they will create a heavier waxy layer on the surface of the leaves and shut their breathing apparatus (called stomates) down. This creates a harder barrier for herbicides to penetrate. Secondly, Ignite 280 has limited movement in the plant. Good coverage is required for products like this. Many of you may remember when Paraquat (now called Gramoxone Inteon) first came out. It required a minimum of 40 gallons of spray material per acre for adequate control. With that amount of spray volume, Paraquat did a tremendous job controlling most weeds we encountered in a no-till situation. What are we using today? In order to get across as many acres as possible, we are using less and less gallons of spray material per acre. It’s not unusual to see 8, 10 or 12 gallons of spray volume used per acre. This is just not enough spray volume for products like Ignite 280 which has limited movement throughout the plant. Lastly, Ignite 280 works best when used with ammonium sulfate. If you substitute other adjuvants or fertilizer-grade products with it, control may be diminished.

One other product that is becoming known for control of glyphosate-resistant horseweed comes from the Kioxor line of materials recently introduced from BASF. The product is called Sharpen. When used in combination with your knock-down product of choice, it can effectively add to the control of emerged horseweed plants. This is especially useful where you are in a 2,4-D sensitive area. As many of you know, 2,4-D can volatilize and drift. If sensitive plant material is within reach, 2,4-D can damage a variety of crops as well as a host of other horticultural plantings. Unfortunately, on coarse soils, with less than 2% organic matter, there is a 30 day preplant restriction for the 1 ounce/acre rate. Recently, Sharpen was labeled up to 1.5 ounces per acre, with a 14 day preplant application on medium and fine soils, and a 44 day preplant application on coarse soils with less than 2% organic matter. Sharpen is also available in a package-mix combination with Outlook under the trade name Verdict. Application rates in corn are from 10 to 18 ounces per acre. However, in soybeans, you are limited to 5 ounces/acre with a 30 day preplant interval for coarse soils with less than 2% organic matter. For optimum control with Sharpen, the addition of a methylated seed oil plus ammonium sulfate is highly recommended.

What other tools will we have down the road? Dicamba-tolerant soybeans should be introduced over the next few years. If you’re not familiar with the common name dicamba, some of the more familiar trade names are Banvel and Clarity. Many of you reading this article will be suspicious of spraying dicamba overtop of soybeans, particularly due to the volatility aspects of dicamba. However, we envision dicamba to be used more as an up-front/knock-down herbicide than an overtop herbicide for soybeans. Like 2,4-D, we could add dicamba to our knock-down product of choice. With the gene for tolerance in the soybeans, we will not have the plant-back restrictions that 2,4-D has, and will be able to plant and spray at the same time.

Weeds will continue to develop resistance to our arsenal of herbicides. Many of you are battling triazine-resistant weeds like pigweed and common lambsquarters. After years of using products such as Scepter and Pursuit, we started to see a number of weeds develop resistance to these products. Some of you are battling Hoelon-resistant Italian ryegrass, and recently, chickweed resistance to products like Harmony and Harmony Extra has been found. In the case of horseweed, we did have a backup tool for postemergence control in soybeans. The product is called FirstRate. However, we have now developed pockets of horseweed resistant to not only glyphosate, but FirstRate as well. This is Mother Nature’s way of saying, “Survival of the Fittest.”

Keep in mind that with any herbicide management program, you need to consider several things. These are: 1) rotate crops; 2) rotate herbicides with different modes of action; 3) if using a single mode of action product – limit its use to one application every year – and if possible – add another product to it with a different mode of action; 4) consider tillage; 5) scout for weed escapes; 6) do not use herbicides above labeled rates; and 7) if you can – utilize herbicides that have numerous sites of action within plants – products like 2,4-D and dicamba – and minimize those that have a single mode of action.
Crop Insurance Updates and Reminders

Dr. Wes Musser, Farm Management Specialist

The crop insurance policy provides protection for a lot of different damage or loss situations. For example, replanting and prevented planting protection is provided for corn, soybeans and numerous other crops. So, if you experience these kinds of problems, be sure to contact your crop insurance agent before you destroy evidence that is necessary to support your loss claim.

Always remember to notify your crop insurance agent immediately and ask what you are required to do if you:

- Added additional land to your operation on which you will be growing insured crops in 2011,
- Have failed newly seeded acreage and need to replant (you may be eligible for a replant payment),
- Are prevented from planting an insured crop by the final planting date (you may be eligible for a prevented planting payment),
- If faced with prevented planting, double check the rules before you take actions,
- Suffer winterkill damage on winter wheat or barley,
- Suffer other crop damage.

DO NOT destroy the evidence of damaged crops or prevented planting acreage until authorized in writing to do so by a loss adjuster.

Crop Insurance is Good Foundation for Pre-harvest Crop Marketing
You can put your 2011 crop insurance protection to work to secure your operational credit (assignment of loss proceeds) and as the foundation of your crop marketing program. Most experts agree the yield on which your guarantee is based, is the least risky bushels for pre-harvest crop pricing. Projected insurance crop prices are $6.01/bu. for corn ($10.75 organic) and $13.52 for soybeans (organic $24.25) in Maryland and Delaware. With continued price volatility, it’s important to have a written marketing plan and follow it to attempt to get above average prices and profits from your crops.

You made good crop insurance choices to protect your valuable grain if a disaster occurs, and following your marketing plan can protect higher prices for your production.

Dairy Gross Margin Insurance (income over feed cost)
Livestock Gross Margin for Dairy Cattle (LGM-Dairy) program was allocated $16 million for underwriting expenditures and current sales have now used all available funding for this plan of insurance. Therefore, LGM-Dairy is no longer available for enrollment. New funding is expected October 2011, the beginning of the next Federal fiscal year. In the meantime, check with your milk buyer, feed supplier and commodity broker to see what risk management tool they can provide that will work for you to manage dairy risks.

Nursery Crop Insurance
Crop insurance protection is available for 2012 for container and/or field grown nursery plants for whole-sale nurseries. Enrollment for new policies can be made by May 1, and at anytime thereafter, with a 30-day waiting period, before protection begins. Premiums are subsidized Enrollment is required for producers to be eligible for the USDA crop disaster program (SURE) from FSA. Insuring at higher levels of coverage increases the guarantee for both programs. Contact a crop insurance agent for details on the above programs.

The policy change date for 2012 is May 31, 2011.
Crop Reports

Western
Garrett, Allegany and Washington counties are all still wet and cold for the most part. Last night Washington County received another 2.5 inches of rain making April 2011 the wettest April on record. Very little corn has been planted. Several dairy farmers have chopped some cereals for forage but the ground is again too saturated to accommodate the heavy forage harvesting equipment. The wheat crop looks very good at this point and to date no insect or disease pressure has been observed. Once warmer, drier days arrive, first cutting hay and corn planting will be in serious competition for the attention of our producers. Sweet corn and other vegetable planting is also behind due to the combination of excess moisture and cool soil temperatures. However, after last summer’s extremely dry weather, we no longer complain about rain.

North East
Soils have plenty of moisture and field work is moving ahead as quickly as possible. Corn planting is in full swing with a significant number of acres planted. Warmer temperatures are pushing top dressed barley to head. Pasture and hay fields are showing rapid spring growth.

Southern
Most barley fields are heading out with wheat not far behind. Small grain condition has improved with warmer weather and drier conditions. Powdery mildew can be found on many barley fields, especially for the variety, Thoroughbred, with many fields warranting a fungicide application. Cereal leaf beetle larvae and aphids can be found in many fields, though populations are still low. Good progress has been made with corn planting over the last two weeks, though planting progress and corn growth is still behind. Windy conditions have made spraying difficult. Most cover crops have been burned down. Soybean planting should be under way this week.

Upcoming Events

Future Harvest field day and Farmer Round Table on May 14th
Salisbury, MD on Saturday May 14th from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. Learn how Ted and Julia Wycall have built Greenbranch Farm into a diversified organic operation serving a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) of over 300 members, farmers’ markets, and an on-farm retail store.

In the morning, Ted will talk about his farming practices and nurturing of the soil, animal husbandry techniques and the use of appropriately scaled equipment and tools. At mid-day, a roundtable discussion, moderated by Local Eastern Shore Sustainable Organic Network (LESSON) project manager Matt Heim, will feature Eastern Shore farmers who direct-market their products to consumers.

Registration costs are: $10 per person; $15 per family. For registration and other details please contact Alice Chalmers at 410-549-7878 or www.futureharvestcasa.org

Forage crops look good. Alfalfa weevil required spraying in a couple of young fields.

Upper Eastern Shore
Barley is heading throughout the region. Wheat heads are starting to emerge in early varieties and others are in the boot stage. There are some fields being sprayed for cereal leaf beetle and powdery mildew, but most are well below threshold levels. Corn planting is progressing slowly with recent rains. Farmers are anxious to start so they are picking and choosing spots dry enough to plant. Weather and residue levels in the region are ideal for potential slug problems. Hay is ready for harvest when the weather cooperates.

Lower Eastern Shore
Field conditions are improving as of this writing. Barley is now headed and wheat is rated good to excellent. Spring manure applications are now mostly complete. Corn planting is now underway in most areas. Pasture conditions are improving, currently rated fair to good. Light insect and disease pressure has been observed at this time.

Central
Corn planting continues to be delayed due to wet conditions. Small grain silage harvest has begun, but again, wet field conditions are prohibiting harvest in some areas. Much of the alfalfa and grass hay will be reaching proper harvest stage by the time this newsletter reaches producers.
Grain Marketing for Women on July 28th
Have you wondered where to get information about grain markets and what terms like options, futures and basis mean? This workshop will introduce grain marketing basics with topics such as finding grain marketing information, crop budgeting, and pricing tools. We will then use a hands-on-approach in writing and implementing a grain marketing plan.
Cost: $10 per person and includes breakfast and materials
Date: Thursday, July 28th 8:30 a.m. – Noon
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD
Economic Development Center - Room 27
To register contact 410-758-0166 or email at jrhodes@umd.edu

Farm Estate Planning Workshop on September 7th
This workshop is for farmers and owners of rural land. Individuals involved in farm estate planning, other businesses serving farmers, and state and local governments will all find this workshop helpful.
Cost: $10 per person and includes lunch and materials
Date: Wednesday, September 7, 8:30 a.m. Registration 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD
Higher Education Center Room 110
To register contact 410-758-0166 or email jrhodes@umd.edu

2011 Horse Pasture Walk Series
Visit the Equine Rotational Grazing Demonstration site at Central Maryland Research and Education Center for a tour of the pastures and an explanation of current management practices. Each pasture walk will feature a special presentation on a different pasture management issue of interest. These events are free, but advanced registration is requested. Educational materials will be provided, and refreshments will be served. All events are rain or shine.

April 21, 2011 6:00 pm—8:00 pm
Renovating Pastures for a Thicker Grass Stand
Your pastures may be green, but is your grass stand as healthy as it can be? Learn how to assess whether a renovation would benefit your pasture and how to increase the growth you’ve already established.

May 26, 2011 6:00 pm—8:00 pm
Using Pasture to Reduce Feed Costs
Horses are natural grazers and under the right conditions a healthy pasture can provide all the nutrition a horse needs. Learn how to use pasture to its full potential and keep those extra dollars in your pocket.

June 23, 2011 6:00 pm—8:00 pm
Best Management Practices for Healthy Pastures
Knowing how and when to rotate, mow, harrow, and over-seed pastures can be tricky. Experts will discuss tips for keeping your pastures in top condition.

July 21, 2011 6:00 pm—8:00 pm
Weed Identification and Control
What weeds are common in horse pastures and how can you control them? Develop your skills in weed identification and learn which weeds are toxic.

Registration Information
To register for horse pasture walks, complete and mail the attached registration form, or simply RSVP to Jennifer Reynolds at jenreyn@umd.edu.

A BIG THANK YOU!!
Maryland Grain Producers' Utilization Board and Maryland Soybean Board are both recognized for their financial contributions that support the publication and distribution of this newsletter. This is another example of the work that is accomplished with the checkoff dollars these two organizations manage.
Did You Know

On average, U.S. growers lose 238 million bushels of grain to weeds, insects and diseases.

SIGN-UP TO RECEIVE “AGRONOMY NEWS”

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email for next year, please contact Rhonda Barnhart at rbarnhar@umd.edu. The subject line should be: Subscribe Agronomy News 2011.

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