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Early Summer Sericea Control

Despite our best efforts, sericea lespedeza continues to be a problem weed across our grassland acres. With its ability to ‘attack’ desirable forages from multiple angles (shading, high water use, and in some species, germination reductions from allelopathic chemicals contained in the plant), it’s no wonder it’s been deemed a noxious weed in the state.

There are various control options for sericea lespedeza (mowing, prescribed fire, grazing with different livestock species) with chemical control the most common. Summer is a great time to initiate control efforts while sericea is in the vegetative stage and susceptible to herbicides like Remedy Ultra and PastureGard HL. Broadcast applications (one to two pints per acre Remedy Ultra or three fourths to one and a half pints per acre PastureGard HL) should be applied in spray volumes of 10-20 gallons/acre for best results. Surmount at two pints per acre is also an option. For spot application, mix a half ounce per gallon of PastureGard HL or a one percent solution of Remedy Ultra in water. Aerial applications should be done at a minimum spray volume of three gallons per acre. Repeat treatments will likely be necessary.

Whether just getting started or continuing a long-term battle against sericea, there are lots of good resources available to assist. One of the most important is your local noxious weed director, a great resource for information on everything from product purchases to rates and timing. A second is your applicator. Good communication with them can enhance control efforts greatly. A third is the 2022 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide, available from any District Office. One page of the book is devoted entirely to sericea lespedeza chemical control options. It can help you determine products to use now as the plants are vegetative as well as other options as the growing season progresses. Request a copy by contacting any District Office or e-mail me at dhallaue@ksu.edu .

Bristly Rose Slug

If you went out to tend to your rose bushes recently and notice skeletonized leaves, the bristly rose slug is the likely culprit. Young larvae will remove the green layer of a leaf leaving behind a clear material. Left unchecked as they mature, they make holes in the leaf and eventually may consume all of the leaf but the major veins.

The Bristly Rose Slug is the larva of a sawfly and not a caterpillar. That means a second look at control products may be necessary. Our commonly used BT products (Dipel and Thuricide) will not be effective. Consider instead some of the commonly available insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, or products containing spinosad or a permethrin-based product.

Want to try something simpler than purchasing a pesticide and applying? Try a strong jet of water all over the plants. The high pressure will dislodge the slugs and make it difficult for them to return to the plant.