

## Pasture Weed Control Update

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As you prepare for the growing season, you may want to consider trying some new methods of controlling weeds in pastures.

### New herbicides

A few new herbicides have been registered for use in pasture this year. *Cayentrtione* (trade name "Aim" marketed by FMC) is effective for controlling several annual broadleaf weeds, but it is weak on established perennials. It has no restrictions on haying and grazing.

Two other herbicides, based on a new chemical (*aminopyralid* from Dow AgroSciences), are now available for use in pastures. Their trade names are "Milestone" (*aminopyralid*) and "ForeFront R&P" (*aminopyralid* + 2,4-D). The active ingredient is expected to provide good control of horsenettle and other difficult-to-control broadleaves in pastures. Unlike Grazon P+D, *aminopyralid* is not a restricted-use herbicide. Since these compounds have had limited testing, their usefulness for weed control in West Virginia pastures is still unknown.

### Roundup Ready alfalfa



Roundup Ready alfalfa has been registered by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and should be available for the 2006 growing season in West Virginia. Research trials have shown promising results in the Northeast.

As with any Roundup Ready crop, this genetically modified crop utilizes glyphosate as the sole weed management tool. It provides a simple and effective weed control program.

A possible disadvantage is that the fiber content may be reduced as a result of limited grass composition. While such a species composition may not be ideal for livestock forage, it may be

desirable for a specialty forage where a pure stand of alfalfa is preferred.

The "stewardship factor" involved in raising herbicide-tolerant crops should also be considered. Using the same herbicide or herbicides repeatedly may hasten the development of herbicide-resistant weeds. Depending upon the alfalfa stand's thickness, replanting may have to be done every four or five years. Herbicides like paraquat and dicamba can control Roundup Ready alfalfa for management purposes. With the technology fee included, the cost of a Roundup Ready alfalfa program should be competitive with conventional programs.

### Star-of-Bethlehem control



Star-of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum*) is a perennial weed that resembles wild garlic. This weed, toxic to livestock, can grow in fields during winter months when most plants are dormant. It does not possess the characteristic odor of wild garlic, but it can be identified by its slender, hollow, succulent leaves having a prominent whitish midrib.

This weed may bloom in April and complete its life cycle by May. Although uncommon in West Virginia, this weed needs to be kept at bay. Star-of-Bethlehem was detected at a farm in Milam (Hardy County) in spring 2005. We evaluated herbicides registered for broadleaf weed control in West Virginia pastures to see if they would control Star-of-Bethlehem.

Our results indicated that Star-of-Bethlehem was controlled by paraquat (Gramoxone at 1.33 pints per acre) or glyphosate (Roundup WeatherMax at 3 quarts per acre) when applied along with 1 percent methylated seed oil (MSO). Regrowth in 2006 will be monitored. Virginia researchers have obtained good control with higher rates of paraquat but poor control with glyphosate. They also reported good results with the new pasture herbicide, *carfentrazone*.

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