



MINNEHAHA
COUNTY

WEEDS TO WATCH

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COMMON MULLEIN

Watch out for **Common Mullen** (*Verbascum thapsus*). This plant is a biennial species producing rosettes during its first year. During the second year of maturation, it bolts and begins to produce seeds.

Begins to grow sparsely as individual plants and then spreads. Other identifying characteristics include taproot with erect stems that are stout and unbranched with a few upright branches near the top. Alternating basal blade leaves are coated with wooly hairs. It flowers in early summer with yellow to pale corolla.

This plant has low palatability and of no feed value. Heavy stands can reduce grass production by 50%.

HABITAT: Commonly found in rangeland, woodland, and pastures.

REPRODUCTION: Common Mullen reproduces only by seed but does so with abundance. The taproot can go deep to access moisture beyond the root

zone of pasture grasses which can quickly overtake a field, especially in dry years.

CONTROL METHODS:

The best strategy is to limit the spread of Common Mullen while plants are few, isolated, and in their first year (rosette stage). This is typically done by spade or shovel in late April or early May. Removal of entire root is preferred but cutting all rosettes at ground level offers similar control.

Single mowing 1-foot tall plants will limit seed production.

Herbicide absorption is reduced by the wooly coat of hairs on leaves. Best to apply herbicide when rosettes are small before stem growth begins in May.

Applications of 2,4-D alone are not effective.

Effective herbicides if not hayed or grazed include:

Aminocyclopyrachlor &

Chlorsulfuron (*Perspective*) at a rate of 4.75 to 8 ounces per acre.

Otherwise:

Metsulfuron (*Escort*) at a rate of 1.5 to 2 ounces per acre.

Chlorsulfuron (*Telar*) applied at a rate of 1 to 3 ounces per acre with Cimarron premix at varied rates.

Imazapic (*Plateau*) applied at a rate of 8 to 12 ounces per acre.

Picloram (*Tordon*) applied at a rate of 2 to 4 pints per acre plus, 2,4-D at a rate of 2 quarts per acre.

As always, follow manufacturer's instructions and see labels for restrictions for spraying near livestock, waterways, and other information.

This information was assembled from the following articles:

Controlling Common Mullen in Pastures by Mark Rosenberg, former SDSU Extension Agronomy-Weeds Field Specialist, Published May 5, 2014.



Typical example of Common Mullen producing yellow flowers in June or July.



Produces rosettes with thick hair cover during its first year of growth.



Stems are erect, stout, unbranched or a few upright branches near the top.

INVASIVE & NOXIOUS WEEDS

Invasive weeds are non-native plants that invade ecosystems and replace native plants.

Noxious weeds are usually invasive and designated by State law as priority plants that require control by landowners. These weeds can reduce grazing land and impact wildlife habitat.

Early detection and quick response is critical to slow

spread and protect weed-free areas.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide early control methods and recommended treatments.

Contact your county Extension agent for management of large infestations or call

Ralph Hammer, Minnehaha County Weed and Pest Supervisor, at 605-367-4316.

