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BLUEWEED MANAGEMENT TIPS

Blueweed, a member of the Borage family, is a biennial forb. It has a black taproot with some fibrous roots. The flowers are typically bright blue, but can be purple, pink or (rarely) white. The leaves are covered with stiff hairs and are distributed alternately along the stem. Blueweed reproduces by seed only. The seeds are small (1/10 inch long) nutlets that are clustered into groups of four. **Seed longevity is one to three years.** Blueweed usually grows from one to three feet tall and is a known host for several plant diseases, including some viruses spread by aphids and three types of wheat rust. The plant is toxic to horses and cattle.



Management and control efforts must be planned for several consecutive years at the existing site in order to prevent seed formation/dispersal and to monitor for, and treat appropriately, any new plants that emerge.

Effective control measures for the management of blueweed include:

- 1. Mechanical (hand pulling & digging):** Hand pulling and digging can be effective for small infestations, and are most effective when the soil is moist. Remove as much of the root as possible and place flowering plants in bags to prevent seed dispersal. Return to the area for several years to monitor for and remove any new plants. Wear gloves when hand pulling or digging plants.
- 2. Herbicide: Always follow directions on the label. The label is the law!** Calibrate your equipment to ensure that you are adding the proper amount of herbicide to your tank. The following herbicides are commonly used to control blueweed. **Do NOT use these herbicides in lawns, turf or ornamental settings – read the label.** *For the most effective control, apply herbicides when plants are in the rosette stage up to the flowering stage.*

Mixing rates in small backpack or hand sprayers are as follows:

*Escort XP:	1/5 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
*Telar XP:	1/5 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
2,4-D Ester:	1.25 oz herbicide to 1 gallon of water (rosette stage).
Crossbow:	1 oz herbicide to 1 gallon of water.

Rates in large sprayers are as follows:

*Escort XP:	1 oz herbicide per acre.
*Telar XP:	1 oz herbicide per acre.
2,4-D Ester:	2.5 pints herbicide per acre (rosette stage).
Crossbow:	1 quart herbicide per acre.

NOTE: Adding a surfactant to your tank mix may enhance the performance of your herbicide and is required for certain herbicides (read the label). Add 0.5 - 1 oz per gallon of water for backpack sprayers or 1 – 2 pints per 100 gallons for large sprayers.

*** denotes that a surfactant is required for the herbicide to be effective**

- 3. Cultural (competition & revegetation):** Proper vegetation and soil management is the best way to prevent blueweed invasion. On heavily infested sites, revegetation may be necessary following herbicide treatment.
- 4. Integrated management:** Management of blueweed is more effective when more than one strategy is used.