



Asotin County Noxious Weed Control Board

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Houndstongue *Cynoglossum officinale*

Description: Houndstongue may be an annual, biennial or short-lived perennial depending upon environmental conditions. The rosette leaves are hairy, linear and resemble a hound's tongue. The erect stem leaves are hairy, alternate and may be 4-12 inches in length. The tap root is thick and woody. The reddish-purple flowers grow in a "scorpion tail" inflorescence. Flowering occurs in early summer. Reproduction is by seed. The seeds disperse by attaching to animal hair and clothing. It can produce up to 2,000 seeds per plant. Houndstongue contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids which can be fatal to livestock. Animals usually avoid it when other pasture is available. If bailed in hay, it still retains its toxic properties.

Habitat: Houndstongue grows in areas of hot, dry summers and cold winters. It is well adapted to coarse alkaline soils as well as clay soils. It is shade tolerant and may grow in open coniferous forests. It also does well in wetter grasslands. It can be found in pastures and other disturbed habitats. It can grow up to 9,000 feet in elevation.

Mechanical: Digging below the root crown will kill the plants. Clipping flowering stocks, prior to flowering, will control seed production. Cultivation in early spring gives good control. Mowing prior to flowering effectively controls seed production.

Biological: A root weevil, *Mogulones cruciger*, and a root beetle, *Longitarsus quadriguttatus*, have both been released in British Columbia. *Mogulones* is reportedly causing noticeable declines in houndstongue populations. The *Longitarsus* populations have been slower to build. These two biocontrols have not been released in the United States because of concerns by U.S. Fish and Wildlife service about the possible impacts that they may have on an endangered plant species in Texas.

Fire: Unknown

Cultural control: It has a low palatability. However, it becomes more palatable when dried and is baled in hay. It contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids which are fatal. Cattle and horses have died from eating it. Wildlife poisonings are unknown.

Fertilizer: Unknown

Chemical: These chemical recommendations are for noncropland areas and are summarized from the “Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook - 2004”. These recommendations are not intended to be a complete resource guide. Label requirements need to be followed for restrictions, concentrations, timing, and nontarget interactions. Chemical control can be effective, but must be maintained for several years to exhaust the seed bank.

- **2,4-D LV ester:**
Rate; 2 lb ae/A
Time; Early spring/before bloom
Remarks; spray before seed set
Caution; Avoid drift; grapes and tomatoes are among crops extremely sensitive to 2,4-D
- **Metsulfuron:** (Escort or Cimarron)
Rate; 0.6 oz ai/A
Time; Apply to actively growing plants
Caution; Application should be to noncrop sites.
- **Picloram:** (Tordon)
Rate; 0.5 lb.ae/A
Time; Apply to actively growing plants
Remarks; Reportedly gives fair to good results
Caution; Do not apply on or near susceptible crops or desirable plants. Label includes buffer zone restrictions, air temperature limits, and grazing restrictions. Do not contaminate water or where surface water from treated areas can run off to adjacent cropland. Do not apply to inner bank or bottom of irrigation ditches. Do not apply to snow or frozen ground. Do not allow grazing in areas where poisonous plants were sprayed until plants have died, herbicide may increase palatability. Do not spray pastures if the forage legume component is desired. Do not move treated soil. Do not transfer livestock onto crop areas for at least 7 days after grazing on land treated with picloram. See label for other restrictions. Most formulations are restricted use. Soil residues may persist for over three years. Many broadleaf crops are sensitive to picloram. Do not use in diversified crop areas.
- **Imazapic:** (Plateau)
Rate; 0.125 to 0.188 lb/A
Time; Apply to actively growing plants
Remarks; Increase concentration for larger rosettes, decrease for smaller rosettes.
Caution; Note special rotational restrictions on label.

Distribution: Houndstongue is scattered throughout Asotin County from 800' to 3,600'. It grows in a wide variety of habitats from shaded forests to dry brushy draws to damp riparian areas.

ACNWCB Policy: In Asotin County, houndstongue is controlled on a complaint basis when the complainant is an adjoining neighbor.

11/30/05

