



Forage Advisor

TerraLink Horticulture Inc.

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Weed Control

Herbicide Choices in Forage Grass Stands

Sword

Still an old standby, Sword is a mix of MCPA, mecoprop and dicamba. It can be used at the 2-4 leaf stage of new seedlings.

Refine SG

New in 2010, Refine SG controls or suppresses a total of 29 broadleaf weeds. It controls two tough weeds; dandelions and clover. MCPA can be added to Refine SG for an extra punch.

DyVel DS

Like Sword, DyVel DS is a "three-way" herbicide but contains a different mix – dicamba, mecoprop and 2,4-D. It is better on established grass stands as it has a higher level of dicamba in it.

MCPA

An old chemical, MCPA is nevertheless useful against weeds in the mustard family as well as a wide range of other weeds.

2,4-D

Like MCPA, this is an old stand-by, being useful on many broadleaf weeds in new or established plantings. It is also good against dandelions.

Lontrel 360

This is a specialty herbicide. Lontrel 360 doesn't control very many families of weeds but is really good on the ones it does control. Lontrel 360 controls any weeds in the legume family (such as clover) and composite family (like thistles). It also gets scentless chamomile, common groundsel and wild buckwheat.

Nitrate Testing

Sidedressing May Be Required this Year

Why? Conditions this spring have been ideal for loss of nitrogen from corn fields. The soluble nitrogen we are used to having in our soils at this time may be gone. With the excessive rain we have had the nitrogen could have been leached away or denitrified (denitrification is a process that occurs when soils become saturated with water, resulting in loss of nitrogen to the atmosphere as a gas). To see an example look at your grass stands. The light green spots have probably been saturated and suffered nitrogen loss.

How? Plan to have a Pre-Sidedress Nitrate Test (PSNT) which will tell you how much nitrate is available in the soil for uptake by your corn and how much may need to be sidedressed to achieve top yields. At TerraLink's Plant Science Lab a PSNT is fast; results usually being returned in 2 working days.

When? A PSNT should be done when the corn is 8-10" tall, or at the six leaf stage. Sidedress nitrogen recommendations are based on the PSNT test values, found in this chart:

PSNT test value (ppm)	Sidedress N Rate (kg N/ha)
25 or higher	0
20 - 24	30
15 - 19	60
10 - 14	90
less than 10	120

Alternative Forage Crop

Alfalfa Production in the Fraser Valley

Although it is still an unusual feed crop in the Fraser Valley, the acres of alfalfa planted seem to be increasing. This is due at least in part to more varieties that are tolerant to our temperate weather and moist soils of the Fraser Valley.

Weed Control

Plan well ahead of planting. Always plan to first apply pre-emergence and pre-plant incorporation herbicide chemicals, falling back on post-emergence products if the weather causes delays. Know which weeds you have, as the chemicals listed below have different strengths and weaknesses.

Pre-plant emergence choices include Eptam 8E and Rival 500 EC. Apply prior to planting and incorporate. You have to be good at seed bed preparation and your incorporation equipment should have good depth controls.

With pre-emerge herbicides the chemical is applied prior to emergence of the weeds. The only choice for alfalfa in this category is Princep Nine-T which controls most annual grasses and broadleaf weeds. It must be applied to alfalfa which is at least 1 year old. Apply in the fall after the last cut.

Post-emergence herbicides are applied after the weeds have emerged. Choices in this category include Kerb 50W, Centurion, Poast Ultra, Venture and Gramoxone.

Alfalfa Autotoxicity

An important cultural aspect to be aware of is alfalfa autotoxicity. This is a form of allelopathy, in which plants

use chemical warfare to defend themselves against competitors. Autotoxicity is a form of allelopathy where the chemicals exuded by a species are toxic to itself. Because of this aspect, one cannot plant alfalfa directly after alfalfa in the same place. Fortunately, the allelopathic chemicals exuded by alfalfa are not toxic to other species, so other forage crops can be planted following alfalfa.

Reference:

<http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/plantsci/forage/autotoxicity.htm>

Toxic Weeds

Black Nightshade

Black Nightshade (*Solanum americanum*) is an annual/short lived perennial herb. It grows to a maximum height of 1.2 m and has white/pale blue flowers borne in bunches. Leaves alternate on the stem and have wavy edges. When the plant is mature the leaves look rather like tomato leaves. Black Nightshade also produces round berries that are green when immature and black when mature. This plant has a taproot root system.



Black Nightshade with immature and mature berries.

Black Nightshade can be found all throughout the province including Vancouver Island. It is commonly found on disturbed sites, such as roadsides, gardens and cultivated fields. It can easily be found in commercial fields all over the Fraser Valley. This weed normally blooms in mid-June and the berries are usually developed by mid-late July. Each plant is capable of producing thousands of seeds, which can last in the soil for a number of years. They are commonly dispersed by humans and wild animals such as birds and rodents. Most of the plant parts contain glycoalkaloids which are poisonous to humans and animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, chickens and pigs. It is generally accepted that the green berries are the most poisonous part of the plant.

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RINSE
Triple or pressure RINSE

REMOVE
Caps and booklet, leave the label on

RETURN
To your local collection site

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Control of Black Nightshade can be achieved mechanically through repeated mowing and cultivation or pulled by hand if there are only a few. Chemical control with glyphosate and dicamba has also been shown to be effective, depending on what crop and situation the weed is in.

References

http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/weedsbc/pdf/black_nightshade.pdf
http://www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/ppack.jump?p_psn=56&p_type=all

Reducing the Carbon Footprint

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Convenient Location

Crop Supplies Available in Delta

Don't forget, you can buy fertilizer, seed and chemicals from TerraLink by going into Roddick Fertilizers at 4119 – 40th Street in Delta. If you farm in the Cloverdale area or to the west, this may be faster for you than coming out to Abbotsford or waiting for a delivery. As it is a small location, not all products are available in-season, but anything can be ordered ahead. The friendly staff can help you just like in Abbotsford. Come in any time, or call 604-946-8338 to order ahead and have your crop supplies waiting for you.

Helpful Tools

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