
Fall Weed Control Offers Rewards

LAWN WEEDS - The moist conditions in August and September have been great for getting winter annual plants like henbit, chickweed, and speedwell going. In addition perennial weeds like white clover and the king of lawn weeds the dandelion are doing very well. Early November would be the best time to use 2,4-D amine or combination of 2,4-D with MCPP and/or dicamba for control of all these invaders, except the clover. The clover does go dormant and we could be too late in November to get a good kill.

This fall treatment could be done in combination with a fertilizer treatment or sprayed separately. Fall fertilization with one to one and a half pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet is a good practice. For a lower maintenance yard the could be the only fertilization treatment in the year. For higher maintenance yards this is a treatment combined with May and June applications.

White clover control is best achieved with multiple applications. The normal response of humans is to double or triple herbicide rates to kill the clover on the spot. The best approach to kill clover is to treat with standard rates or even lower than standard rates and treat numerous times. For example, treat now, then again in April, May, and June. Every time the plants start to recover, they get another dose. The other thing is that standard rates do not affect the grass which you want healthy and competing with the suffering clover.

Henbit is an opportunist. It grows where there is no grass. 2,4-D amine will kill it readily in the fall, but won't do more than yellow it a bit in the spring. The ultimate answer to henbit and speedwell is to have a good healthy grass cover offering no space for them to grow.

CROPLAND WEEDS - The surface moisture has been great for henbit and the mustard clan (pennycress, wild mustard, tansy mustard, yellow rocket, and several others). Henbit has been increasing in recent years in cropland fields. Henbit and pennycress use stored moisture and can invite insect pests to the field. Fall control should be considered as the best approach. Using 2,4-D LV ester or glyphosate in combination with early season weed control agents like Pursuit for 2007 soybean fields, or atrazine for 2007 corn or milo fields could be beneficial. Treated fields will stay clean until preplant, planting time, or early post treatments for weed control. Dandelion control has been a problem for some ridge-till and no-till operations. Dandelions are easy to kill in the fall with either 2,4-D LV ester or glyphosate applications.

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