



WEED ASSESSMENT

All landowners should be prepared to address problems with noxious and invasive weeds. No matter how you use your land, weeds can find their way onto your property. Once they do, they can spread rapidly, choke out forage for livestock and wildlife, and reduce the productivity of pastures, gardens, and crops. Because weeds are often less effective at holding the soil in place, they also contribute to soil erosion and water pollution. Many weeds are also poisonous to livestock. Complete the following assessment to begin developing your management strategy to control weeds on your property.

STEP 1: Familiarize Yourself with the Weeds in Your Area

Refer to the following online resources to obtain a better understanding of the weeds in your area.

Site	Description	Address
National Invasive Species Information Center	US Department of Agriculture Invasive Species Databases	https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/subject/databases
Kansas Department of Agriculture Weed Page	statutes, regulations, quarantines and contact information	https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/plant-protect-weed-control
Midwest Invasive Species Network - Kansas	A regional effort for invasive species	http://www.misin.msu.edu/states/kansas/
Invasive Plants of Kansas	Kansas Native Plant Society Invasive Plant List	http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/invasive_plants.php
Kansas State-listed Noxious Weeds	NRCS Introduced, Invasive and Noxious Weeds	https://plants.usda.gov/java/noxious?rptType=State&statefips=20

List any additional sites you find in your research for future reference:

STEP 2: Develop a Weed Watch List

Compile a list of targeted weeds for your property. Take notes on identifying features, print photographs and attach any information that will help you identify these plants.

Species: _____ Notes: _____
 Season _____
 Visible: _____

Site: _____ Date: _____

Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
	_____	_____
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Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

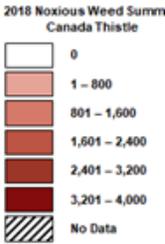
Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
	_____	_____
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Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
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Field: _____	Species Present: _____	Control Method & Timing: _____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

TIP: 1 Weeds to Watch For

The weeds listed here are aggressive and competitive - stealing moisture, nutrients and sunlight from other plants. Keep in mind, however that this is just a starting point for your research. Review relevant websites and talk to professionals to learn about other key species.



Weed	Description	Distribution
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Sericea Lespedeza



Perennial; short-lived in the bean family native to Asia. The plant has cream colored flowers with purple markings and leaves with three parts. It is common in rangelands and prairies throughout eastern Kansas, especially in the Flint Hills.

Field Bindweed



Perennial; blooms June to September. Stems are prostrate, one to four foot long from an extensive root system that often climbs or forms dense tangled mats. Flowers bell or trumpet shaped, white to pinkish and one inch in diameter. It competes with crops for moisture and nutrients, and is difficult to remove once established. The twining nature of the plant hampers harvesting of crops, especially in orchards and vineyard.

Musk Thistle



Biennial; the second year the plant sends up a stalk with purple "powder puff" shaped flowers. Seed dispersal begins 7 to 10 days after blooming. Seeds are straw-colored, oblong, and 1/8 inch in length. The seeds are attached to parachute-like hairs which are dispersed by wind currents. Musk thistle reproduces only by seed, new infestations will be reduced by any action to prevent the production and movement of seed.

Johnsongrass



Perennial; An upright perennial, it often grows 6 to 8 feet tall. It has wide leaves with thickened whitish midribs; its panicles (seed heads) are open, and the many branches support thousands of spikelets from which seeds are readily shattered. A single plant may produce more than 80,000 seeds in a single growing season, and 275 feet of rhizomes. Known to reduce yields in corn, grain sorghum, soybean, cotton and leguminous forages.

Bush Honeysuckle



Deciduous woody shrub grows upright and can reach heights over 6 feet, produces white flowers from May into June. In early fall, bush honeysuckle plants begin producing distinct, bright red berries. The shrub outcompetes native plants for sunlight and resources, reducing species diversity, negatively impacting wildlife habitat, and decreasing local ecosystem functionality.

Leafy Spurge



An aggressive perennial herb. Grows upright, branching, and reaches two-three feet tall with tough woody stems that exude milky white latex sap when broken. Leafy spurge is capable of invading disturbed sites, including prairies, savannas, pastures, abandoned fields and roadside areas. All parts of this plant contain a poisonous latex sap that can cause skin irritations in humans, cattle, and horses and may cause permanent blindness if rubbed into the eye.

Old World Bluestem



Perennial; species and grow from their established root systems, there is a very limited number of methods available for controlling them. They produce natural chemicals that prevent any other species from growing around them, reducing competition for water and nutrients and creating large areas where nothing else can grow.

TIP: 2 Weed Control

Weeds spread fast, so regularly look for new weed patches on your property. Act immediately to treat them by using one or more of the practices listed below. Team up with neighbors to improve effectiveness. Remember, weed control itself is not enough. It is also necessary to modify the practices that caused weeds to become established in the first place.

- ✓ **Prevention.** Good land management will help keep desirable vegetation healthy and weeds under control. Avoid over-grazing that leaves bare spots for weeds, buy weed-free hay, plant certified seed, wash your vehicle after being in a weed-infested area, monitor your property, and respond quickly to any new weed infestations.
- ✓ **Biological.** Biological control attempts to find something in nature that can weaken or eventually kill a weed plant. Successful bio-agents include certain fungi and insects that weaken weeds by attacking seed heads and other plant parts. Bio control methods are used when eradication is not possible.
- ✓ **Mechanical.** Mow annually before weeds go to seed. Pull small patches and weeds near streams by hand.
- ✓ **Livestock Grazing.** Graze weeds before they go to seed using sheep, goats or cattle. Because livestock and wildlife can easily carry and spread seed on their coats and in their feces, avoid moving livestock from a weedy area to a weed-free area. Some weed species, if eaten, will make livestock sick.
- ✓ **Chemical Herbicides.** Herbicides can be safe and effective when properly applied. Always read the chemical label carefully and follow directions. Use chemicals away from water to avoid harming you, your animals or wildlife, and to prevent stream and groundwater pollution. Only certified pesticide applicators can use restricted herbicides. Call a farm supply store to find out about hiring custom chemical applicators. Be sure herbicides will not reach and kill desirable trees and shrubs. Dispose of leftover chemicals at hazardous waste facilities.

Gather Additional Information and Assistance

- ✓ *Douglas County, Kansas Noxious Weeds*
<https://www.douglascountyks.org/depts/public-works/services/noxious-weeds-and-sensitive-crops>
- ✓ *Kansas Department of Agriculture Plant Protection and Weed Page*
statutes, regulations, quarantines and contact information
<https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/plant-protect-weed-control>
- ✓ *Noxious Weeds - Integrated Pest Management*
<https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/s30.pdf>
- ✓ *Brush and Weed Control in Pasture and Rangeland*
Kansas State University Research and Extension
<https://www.frontierdistrict.k-state.edu/livestock/brush-control/docs/Weed-Brush-Control.pdf>
- ✓ *KU Biodiversity - Plant Identification Service*
<https://biodiversity.ku.edu/botany/collections/plant-identification>

