

Weed Control In Wheat

URBANA, ILL.

Don't forget about weeds that may appear and populate a wheat or oat field after harvest. Weeds like common ragweed, velvetleaf, pigweed, foxtails, and fall panicum can produce large amounts of seed if allowed to reach maturity.

Producers have several options to control weeds in small grain stubble fields including mowing, tillage, and herbicides. These should be implemented before weeds begin to produce seed.

Mowing is especially effective in reducing the amount of weed seed produced by established broadleaf weeds. The mower should cut as close to the ground as possible. Mowing may not completely eliminate weed seed production, since some seed could be produced by plants that regrow or from tillers present on grasses below the height of cutting. Also, perennial

weeds that spread by underground rootstocks, like Canada thistle, are not effectively controlled by a single mowing.

Tillage is effective in controlling established weeds, but tillage can stimulate germination and emergence of additional weeds. Fuel consumption and cost and the potential for erosion need to be considered before using tillage to control weeds in stubble fields.

Various herbicides are available that can provide broad-spectrum weed control. Glyphosate, 2,4-D, and dicamba are examples of herbicides that can be applied alone or in combination. Be sure to read and follow label directions, especially noting rates, additives, and rotation intervals. Precautions need to be taken to reduce herbicide drift.

Small grain stubble also provides the opportunity to establish a cover crop or forage crop. Both annual and perennial crop options exist. Δ