

Gregg County Office  
405 E. Marshall, Ste 101  
Longview, TX 75601  
903-236-8429

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**NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:**

***DENNIS SMITH***  
***COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT***  
***GREGG COUNTY***

**Weed Control in Turf**

Aggressive competitors for sunlight, moisture, and nutrients and prolific multipliers even under adverse conditions, weeds present a challenge for even the most experienced turfgrass managers. The color, texture, and growth rate of weeds often contrast markedly to those of the turfgrasses they may be associated with in a lawn or sports field. Consequently, weeds detract from the uniformity of a turf and add to its maintenance requirements.

In lawns and sports fields, weeds are often the result of poor quality turf. The aggressive nature of weeds and their prolific reproductive capacity enable them to invade thin, weak turf areas. Cultural practices should always be viewed as the first step to effective weed control. Always determine why weeds established a foothold and correct those deficiencies. If the basic problem is not corrected, weeds will continue to occur. An effective weed-control program also requires identification of the undesirable species as to its classification as a grassy weed, a broadleaf weed, an annual, or a perennial. Most turf weeds belong to two principal categories - grasses and broadleaf plants. Chemical controls for these two categories of plants frequently differ.

Grassy weeds have jointed, hollow stems; leaf blades have veins parallel to leaf margins, and are several times longer than they are wide; roots are fibrous and multi-branching; and flowers are usually inconspicuous. In contrast, broadleaved plants often have showy flowers; leaves have a network of veins at diverse angles to one another; stems are often pithy; and a taproot is usually present. Another group of turf weeds, sedges, have grasslike characteristics, but require a different group of chemicals for control. Sedges are characterized by three-sided stems (triangular cross-section) which bear leaves in three directions (in contrast to the two-ranked arrangement of grass leaves).

Weeds can be further grouped according to their life span - annual or perennial. From the standpoint of chemical control, the grouping is most important, because

pre-emergent herbicides are only effective for control of annual weeds. Annual weeds germinate from seed each year, mature in one growing season, and die in less than 12 months. Crabgrass and henbit are examples of annual weeds - crabgrass being a summer annual and henbit being a winter annual. Pre-emergent herbicides must be applied according to the expected date of emergence for each targeted species.

Perennial weeds live more than one year, and recover or regrow from dormant stolons, rhizomes, or tubers as well as from seed. Control of perennial weeds requires a postemergent herbicide during its season of active growth.

Effective chemical weed control requires identification of the weeds as to their classification (grass, broadleaf, sedge, etc.), life span (annual or perennial), and season of active growth (cool season or warm season). Effective chemical control also requires accurate timing of applications, proper rate of application, and uniformity of application. Always follow label directions for a product, and observe all warnings and precautions relative to safety of the application. Herbicide labels should be carefully reviewed for additional details on specific uses of each product soil and sunny locations.

## **Oil Belt Farm and Ranch Club meeting**

Understanding and utilizing EPD's (Expected Progeny Differences) continues to be a popular topic among many beef cattle producers. Often times these numbers may be confusing to some of us. Dr. Jason Banta, Extension Beef Cattle Specialist with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Overton will present a program on "Using EPD's in Bull Selection," on Monday, March 16, 2009 beginning at 7:00 p.m. The program will be held at the Texas AgriLife Extension Service auditorium located at 405 East Marshall in Longview. This program will simplify the use of the EPD numbers in selecting the correct bull for your herd.

Dr. Banta will also discuss "External Parasite Control on Beef Cattle."

Producers with a Texas Department of Agriculture pesticide license or certificate will receive 1 CEU at the conclusion of this program. Anyone interested in beef cattle production is invited to attend this educational program.

*Dennis Smith can be contacted at the Gregg County Extension Office by e-mail at [dg-smith@tamu.edu](mailto:dg-smith@tamu.edu) or telephone at: 903-236-8429.*

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.