

## Alfalfa Weed Control Options

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### Establishing New Stands

- Balan or Eptam
- Must incorporate both herbicide—neither herbicide will last that long, but still offer some effective control
  - ✓ Balan – apply and incorporate within 3 weeks prior to planting.
  - ✓ Good activity on annual grasses, but only fair on many annual broadleaf weeds
  - ✓ Eptam – (Remember Eradicane?)
    - Can be applied by chemigation
    - Weak on broadleaf weeds, activity on yellow nutsedge

### Seedling Alfalfa, 2-4 trifoliolate leaves

- Buctril (4 trifoliates)
  - ✓ Broadleaf weed control, no activity on grasses
  - ✓ Very weak on pigweeds
  - ✓ Susceptible weeds must be small, coverage is important, no soil activity
  - ✓ May be mixed with 2,4-DB or Pursuit
  - ✓ Do not cut or graze spring-treated alfalfa within 30 days after application (DAA), or winter-treated alfalfa 60 DAA
- 2,4-DB (2 to 4 trifoliates)

- ✓ Broad spectrum broadleaf weed control
  - ✓ Good alone or tank-mixed with Buctril, Pursuit, Poast Plus, Select
  - ✓ Needs crop oil for effective weed control, but slight crop injury may be observed
  - ✓ Biggest concern is drift to susceptible crops (cotton) and improper tank cleanout prior to use in other crops (cotton). Separate spray systems are recommended.
  - ✓ Do not graze seedling alfalfa with 60 days after application (DAA), or established alfalfa within 30 DAA
- Poast Plus or Select
- ✓ The herbicides have activity postemergence on grassy weeds only. No activity on broadleaf weeds (and crops) and no soil activity
  - ✓ Poast Plus may be better for annual grasses, but for johnsongrass and hard-to-control grasses favor Select
  - ✓ Do not graze, feed, or harvest undried forage with 7 days after application (DAA) or feed or harvest dry hay 14 DAA (Poast Plus). For Select, the harvest, grazing, or feeding for forage or hay is 15 DAA.
- Pursuit (2 trifoliates)
- Apply in the fall, in the spring to dormant or semi-dormant alfalfa, or between cuttings
  - ✓ Has both foliar and soil activity
  - ✓ Works best on small weeds
  - ✓ Reasonably good control of broadleaf weeds, but grass control can be inconsistent
  - ✓ Add surfactant and liquid N
  - ✓ Be aware that Pursuit has an 18 month rotation restriction before planting cotton and sorghum
  - ✓ Days to harvest interval: 30
- Raptor (2 trifoliates)
- ✓ Same type chemistry as Pursuit, but better post activity on most weeds and grasses
  - ✓ Apply to rosette weeds before they exceed 3 inches
  - ✓ Shorter residual than Pursuit
  - ✓ Crop safety is good, but not as good as Pursuit
  - ✓ There must be an interval of at least 20 days between application and cutting or feeding of alfalfa forage or hay and an interval of 70 days when using alfalfa seed for food or feed

Both Pursuit and Raptor have greatly helped getting alfalfa established, especially in weedy fields.

## **Established Alfalfa, One Year Old**

All of the above products are also labeled for use in established alfalfa

Dormant Alfalfa—As a precaution, keep in mind that many alfalfas, particularly Fall Dormancy (FD) 7 and higher essentially do not go completely dormant in the winter, and we can assume

that some injury would occur. For alfalfas that are generally considered semi-dormant, (FD 4 to 6), producers need to evaluate the crop. FD 4 is pretty much dormant in West Texas, but FD 5 and 6 could remain green, and an FD 6 might even grow a little on a warm day. FD 7 certainly would.

➤ Velpar

Apply in late winter

Has both soil and foliar activity

Strong on mustards and will pick up later-emerging weeds

Good activity on winter grasses

Do not graze or feed treated forage or hay with 30 days after application

➤ Karmex

Apply in late winter.

Has both soil and foliar activity.

Often used in combination with Velpar, but may burn alfalfa slightly more than Velpar alone

➤ Velpar AlfaMax

Premix of Velpar and Karmex. Gives longer residual than Velpar applied alone.

See above

➤ Sencor

✓ Apply to dormant alfalfa

✓ Activity mostly on broadleaf weeds, but it has some activity on grasses

✓ Cannot use on soils with a pH greater than 7.5

✓ Days to harvest or grazing: 28

### Non-Dormant Alfalfa

➤ Treflan (formulations 4EC and 10G)

✓ Some formulations can be applied through chemigation

✓ Must be incorporated within 48 hours after application. Single rainfall or overhead sprinkle irrigation of 0.5 inches or more can be used to incorporate

✓ Key is getting it incorporated before weeds emerge.

✓ Dodder control

➤ Prowl H2O

✓ May be applied through chemigation

✓ Must be applied prior to weed emergence

✓ Among key restriction notes is no application within 50 days of harvest.

*Roundup Ready varieties are now widely available in all fall dormancy groups.*

➤ Roundup

✓ Broad-spectrum control of grass and broadleaf weeds

✓ New stands should be sprayed early on to eliminate any non-Roundup Ready seedlings

- before they become established (this is normal).
- ✓ Proven and familiar herbicide
- ✓ Excellent crop safety
- ✓ May use up to 44 oz Roundup WeatherMax (check newest formulations for possible changes in maximum rate) per application; up to 132 oz. per year
- ✓ Grazing and harvesting interval is five days after application

## Herbicide/Weed Control Ratings

Herbicide	Pigweed	Kochia	Mustards	Cheat	Barnyard Grass	Sandbur	Johnson grass
Balan	F	G	P	G	G	G	P
Eptam	F	F+	P	G	F	F+	P+
Buctril	F+	F	F	P	P	P	P
2,4-DB	G	G	G	P	P	P	P
Karmex	G-	G	G	F	G	F+	P
Velpar	G-	G	G	G	F	F+	P
Pursuit	G	G+	G	P	G-	P+	F+
Raptor	G	G	G	P	G	P+	F+
Prowl	G	G-	P+	G	G	G-	P
Treflan	G	G-	P+	G	G	G-	P
Poast Plus	P	P	P	G	G	G	F
Select	P	P	P	G	G	G	G
Roundup	G	G	G	G	G	G	G

G = Good, F = Fair, P = Poor

### General soil types:

- Fine = silty clay loam, clay loam, sandy clay, silty clay, clay
- Medium = loam, silt loam, silt, sandy clay loam
- Coarse = sand, loamy sand, sandy loam

### For ready online access to multiple chemical labels consult:

- Chemical Management Data Systems, [www.cdms.net](http://www.cdms.net) To use the free database, log in then: 1) click 'Services' then 'Labels/MSDS,' 2) enter the desired product name in the search box (keep the name simple, for example 'Prowl' rather than 'Prowl H<sub>2</sub>O' to ensure you return all labels for Prowl products), 3) select the label of your choice, then 4) choose the main label or any supplemental labels you might need. You may also search by active ingredient (Click 'Services' then 'Other search options,' register with CDMS to search by crop, active ingredient, chemical type, state, etc.).
- Greenbook, [www.greenbook.net](http://www.greenbook.net), where your search category includes product name, active ingredient, crop, or pest (registration required).

## **Chemical & Worker Safety**

Herbicide safety is paramount. For emergency medical treatment information call the emergency number listed on your chemical label, or your local 9-1-1 if you can't get the label. If you have an accident and must require examination and possible treatment take the chemical label with you.

### **Additional Texas A&M AgriLife Extension weed control expertise may be obtained from the following:**

- Dr. Paul Baumann¶, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, College Station, (979) 845-4880, [p-baumann@tamu.edu](mailto:p-baumann@tamu.edu)
- Dr. Peter Dotray¶, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Lubbock, (806) 746-6101, [pdotray@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:pdotray@ag.tamu.edu)
- Mr. James Grichar, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Beeville, (361) 358-6390, [w-grichar@tamu.edu](mailto:w-grichar@tamu.edu)

**This publication is no substitute for the herbicide product labels! It is intended to serve only as a guide for controlling weeds in sorghum. Because labeled rates and restrictions change constantly, consult a current product label before use.**

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