

## Weed Control in Wheat

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Information listed here is based on research and outreach extension programming at Purdue University and elsewhere.

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The most common broadleaf or perennial weed problems we run into at this time of year in Indiana wheat include chickweed, deadnettle, henbit, dandelion, mustards, field pennycress, shepherdspurse, Canada thistle, and wild garlic. The most common grass problems are annual bluegrass, annual ryegrass, cheat, and downy brome. Some of the commonly used herbicides, rates, their application timings, and weeds controlled are listed in the table below.

It is important to be aware that restrictions exist concerning application timing of these herbicides to avoid crop injury. Phenoxy herbicides, such as 2,4-D and MCPA, control a number of annual broadleaf weeds and are the least expensive of these herbicides to use. However, proper application timing of the growth-regulating herbicides 2,4-D, MCPA and Banvel is critical to avoid crop injury and possible yield losses. These herbicides can cause substantial crop injury and yield loss in small grains if applied before tillering begins or after development of the grain heads have been initiated.

The exact time at which grain heads have been initiated is not easy to determine, but this event always just precedes stem elongation. The occurrence of stem elongation can be easily detected by the appearance of the first node or "joint" above the soil surface, commonly referred to as the "jointing stage." Pinch a wheat plant stem at the base between the thumb and forefinger and slide your fingers up the stem. The presence of a node or joint will be felt as a hard bump about an inch above the soil surface. Slicing the stem lengthwise with a sharp knife will reveal a cross section of the hollow stem and solid node. If jointing has occurred, applications of 2,4-D, MCPA and Banvel should be avoided because crop injury and yield loss are likely. Research from the University of Missouri Weed Science program has shown a 3- to 6-bushel per acre yield loss from 2,4-D and Banvel applications to wheat after the jointing stage. MCPA alone at labeled rates should be applied before jointing. However, the amount of MCPA applied in Bronate, a combination of bromoxynil and MCPA, is low enough to permit later applications.

Many wheat fields in Indiana contain wild garlic and wild onion. Although not considered as strong competitors with a wheat crop, wild garlic (*Allium vineale*) and wild onion (*Allium canadense*) are both responsible for imparting a strong odor to beef and dairy products. Wheat producers and grain elevator operators are very familiar with dockages that occur with the presence of wild garlic or onion bulbs in their harvested grain. Found throughout Indiana, wild garlic is a native of Europe, while wild onion is native. Despite the fact that these perennials both occur in similar habitats, wild garlic occupies the majority of small grain settings, including wheat.

Control measures for wild onion and wild garlic will differ. Producers, consultants and industry personnel will want to make certain that they are

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able to distinguish between these two weed species. The vegetative leaves of wild garlic are linear, smooth, round and hollow. The flowering stems are solid. A major difference with wild onion is that its leaves are flat in cross section and not hollow. Another varying feature are the underground bulbs. Wild garlic's bulbs have a thin membranous outer coating while wild onion's bulbs have a fibrous, net-veined coating.

Harmony Extra (thifensulfuron + tribenuron) is the herbicide most commonly used for control of garlic in wheat, plus it controls a relatively wide spectrum of other broadleaf weeds and possesses a fairly wide application window. Harmony GT (thifensulfuron) also has activity on wild garlic, but is considered to be slightly weaker than Harmony Extra. Peak is also labeled and effective on wild garlic in wheat, but it is fairly persistent in soil. The Peak label does not allow one to plant double crop soybean following wheat harvest in Indiana. Wild onion is controlled with 2,4-D. Keep in mind that both of these weeds are perennials and the full labeled rate is needed for adequate control.

Over the last couple of years, dandelion infestations in wheat have increased dramatically, particularly in the eastern part of Indiana. The best dandelion control is usually obtained with fall applications of glyphosate before wheat is planted. So keep this in mind for fields that will be planted to wheat in coming fall. For this spring, the best approach to dandelion management in wheat will be the higher rates of 2,4-D, Stinger, or Curtail. Stinger will have the widest application window and can be applied up until the boot stage.

Finally, we now have a couple of grass herbicides labeled for use in Indiana wheat, Axial and Osprey. Osprey controls annual bluegrass and annual ryegrass; while Axial controls ryegrass, foxtails, and barnyardgrass.

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Active Ingredient	Trade Name(s)	Rate per A	Application Timing	Broadleaf Control	Grass Control
2,4-D	Weedar, Weedone, Formula 40, others	1 to 2 pts 0.5 to 2 lb ai	Tillering to before jointing	Prickly and wild lettuce, mustards, field pennycress, shepherd's purse, lambsquarter, pigweed, ragweeds > horseweed (marestail) > wild garlic	
Bromoxynil	Buctril, Moxy 1.5	2 pts	Emergence to boot stage	Mustards, wild buckwheat, lambsquarter, common ragweed, smartweeds > henbit, field pennycress, shepherd's purse, giant ragweed > pigweed	
Bromoxynil + MCPA	Bronate, Bison	1 to 2 pts	After 3-leaf stage but before wheat reaches boot stage	Same as bromoxynil and MCPA	

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Active Ingredient	Trade Name(s)	Rate per A	Application Timing	Broadleaf Control	Grass Control
Bromoxynil + pyrasulfotole	Huskie	11 oz	After 1-leaf stage up to flag leaf emergence	Purple deadnettle, henbit, prickly and wild lettuce, horseweed (marestail), mustards, field pennycress, shepherdspurse, lambsquarter, pigweed and ragweeds > wild buckwheat, smartweeds > chickweed	
Carfentrazone	Aim	0.33 to 0.66 oz	Before jointing	Catchweed bedstraw, velvetleaf > pigweed > field pennycress, lambsquarter	
Clopyalid	Stinger	0.25 to 0.33 pts	After 2-leaf stage until boot stage	Horseweed (marestail), wild buckwheat, ragweeds, Canada thistle, dandelion > prickly and wild lettuce, smartweed	
Clopyralid + 2,4-D	Curtail	1 to 2.67 pts	Tillering to jointing	Prickly and wild lettuce, mustards, field pennycress, shepherd's purse, wild buckwheat, lambsquarter, pigweed, ragweeds, Canada thistle, dandelion > horseweed (marestail)	
Clopyralid + fluroxypyr	WideMatch	1 to 1.33 pts	After 2-leaf stage until boot stage	Wild buckwheat, horseweed (marestail), ragweeds > prickly and wild lettuce, Canada thistle, dandelion	
Dicamba	Banvel	0.125 to 0.25 pt	Emergence to before jointing	Wild buckwheat, lambsquarter, pigweed, ragweeds, smartweed > prickly and wild lettuce, horseweed (marestail), shepherd's purse,	
Fluroxypyr	Starane	0.5 to 0.6 pt	From 2-leaf up to and including flag leaf emergence	Hemp dogbane, ragweeds	
MCPA	Chiptox, Rhomene, Rhonox	1 to 4 pts	Tillering to before jointing	Field pennycress, shepherd's purse, mustards, ragweeds, lambsquarter, pigweed, prickly lettuce > wild, buckwheat, horseweed (marestail)	
Mesosulfuron-methyl + safener	Osprey	4.75 oz	After emergence or spring before jointing		Annual ryegrass > annual bluegrass
Pinoxaden	Axial	8.2 oz	2-leaf to preboot stage		Ryegrass, foxtails, and barnyardgrass
Prosulfuron	Peak	0.5 oz	Emergence to second node visible	Mustards, field pennycress, pigweed, common ragweed > prickly and wild lettuce, shepherd's purse, wild buckwheat, wild garlic, wild onion	

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Active Ingredient	Trade Name(s)	Rate per A	Application Timing	Broadleaf Control	Grass Control
Thifensulfuron	Harmony GT	0.3 to 0.6 oz	After 2-leaf stage but before flag leaf becomes visible	Chickweed, purple deadnettle, henbit, prickly and wild lettuce, mustards, field pennycress, lambsquarter, pigweed > shepherd's purse, wild buckwheat, smartweed, Canada thistle, wild garlic and onion	
Thifensulfuron + tribenuron	Harmony Extra	0.3 to 0.6 oz	After 2-leaf stage but before flag leaf becomes visible	Wild garlic and onion, field pennycress, mustards, chickweed, henbit shepherd's purse > prickly and wild lettuce, horseweed (marestail), wild buckwheat	
Tribenuron	Express	1/6 to 1/3 oz	After 2-leaf stage but before flag leaf becomes visible	Chickweed, deadnettle, henbit, wild lettuce, mustards, field pennycress, lambsquarter	

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