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Extension Extra

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Fall Yard and Garden Weed Control

by Leon J. Wrage, Extension agronomist -- weeds,
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Fall Weed Work

Things to do:

- * Remove weeds in garden.
- * Collect clippings with weed seed.
- * Control creeping jenny and quackgrass in gardens.
- * Treat dandelion, clover in lawns.
- * Apply herbicide for edging.

Fall is best because:

- * Control is better than in spring.
- * Only time to control ground ivy.
- * Less risk of damage to flowers, shrubs.
- * Only time to treat in gardens.
- * Spreads work load.

Lawn Weeds

- Collect clippings if late-season weeds like crabgrass have produced a heavy seed crop. This reduces the problem next year.
- Don't spray annuals. It doesn't pay to use herbicides in late fall on annual weeds that have seeded. Frost will kill the plants.
- Perennial weeds are most effectively controlled in late fall. Herbicides move deeper into the root. There is less risk of drift damaging non-target plants.
 - Skip mowing to allow more weed growth.
 - Wait until mid to late September; select a warm, sunny day after the first light frost.
 - Use spray formulations. Weed/feed products add more fertilizer than required for late fall. Liquid sprays allow retreating.
 - Apply carefully to avoid spray contact on desirable broadleaf plants.
 - Weeds must be actively growing. Perennials should have new growth.
 - Don't spray after killing freeze has damaged (browned) weed leaves. Drought stress reduces control.

White Clover

Fall spraying is very effective. Only one application required. Use spray products containing 2,4-D + MCPP + dicamba or 2,4-D + MCPP.

Dandelion

Tests show nearly 100% prevention of spring dandelion blooms. Controls seedlings and established plants. Use any 2,4-D spray product; it may be in combinations with other herbicides. Use full dilution rate. One application is adequate.

Ground Ivy

Spring treatments are ineffective. Use 2,4-D + MCPP + dicamba as first choice. A second application in 10-14 days is required. Has been 85-90% effective in SDSU W.E.E.D. Project tests.

Field Bindweed

Allow for extra vine growth. Late fall most effective. Use any 2,4-D product.

Violets, Plantain

Fall is the most effective time to treat. Use a small hand sprayer to treat only the weed. Use 2,4-D + MCPP + dicamba as most effective choice.

Examples of products are listed below. Check your lawn supply center for these ingredients available in other products.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 2,4-D | - Numerous products -- most lawn products are mixes with other chemicals. |
| 2,4-D+MCP | - Ortho Weed-B-Gon, Black Leaf Weed Killer, Scott's Lawn Weed Control, Weedone Amine |
| 2,4-D+2,4-DP | - Weedone DPC |
| 2,4-D+MCP+dicamba | - "Trimec", Gordon Weed-No-More, Ortho Chickweed, Spurge & Oxalis Killer D. |

Gardens

Weed Clean-Up. Continue to cultivate, hoe, or pull weeds until freezeup. Continue even though produce is harvested. Annual weeds like foxtail, crabgrass, pigweed and lambsquarters produce seed that will cause weed problems next year. Some weeds produce as few as 200 seeds per plant; pigweed may have one million seeds on large plants. Use care in removing weed growth. Raking them across the garden shatters seed. Burning does not kill weed seed on the soil surface.

Fall Bindweed and Quackgrass. Fall is the time to use herbicides for these perennial weeds in vegetable gardens. Quackgrass and other perennials often invade from borders. Field bindweed is a deep-rooted, persistent perennial. Use glyphosate (Roundup, Roundup L&G) as a spray on the weed foliage.

- Plan control by planting early vegetables in the section to be treated.
- Don't till or remove fall growth -- it's best to have several inches of weed growth.
- Weeds must have active, new growth; control of drought stressed weeds is reduced.
- Spray in late fall - mid to late September most years. Perennial grasses can be sprayed later. A warm, sunny day after first "white frost" is excellent.
- Use care to avoid spray drops or drift from contacting desirable grass, shrubs, flowers, etc. Don't walk across the lawn with footwear that is wet from the spray.
- Wait at least 2 weeks; then till the garden.

Edging

Many weeds, especially grasses, invade border plantings, gravel areas, or rock borders around beds. Fall is an excellent time to use a glyphosate (Roundup, Roundup L&G, Kleenup) spray to control the grasses and establish the border for next year. Apply the spray using a small, hand applicator. Use low pressure so the spray pattern is clearly controlled in the "intended area". Use caution:

- Don't let wind blow the spray to grass and other desirable plants.
- Don't overapply so spray runs from rocks or gravel.
- Don't treat areas where perennial flowers, shrubs or shoots of plants such as raspberry will be sprayed.

SAFETY

- Always follow label directions.
- Use suitable gloves and clothing to cover exposed skin.
- Store products in secure area, away from children.
- Keep in original containers.
- Allow treated areas to dry before children and pests move over the area.

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