

**A LITTLE BIT COUNTRY
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Prevented Planting Information

A few weeks ago I referred to the April 30 blizzard as a "once in a lifetime" event. This spring's weather also fits into that category. For that matter, the entire winter and spring were far from normal.

Area producers remain optimistic that they will plant some crop, but the likelihood of a record number of acres not planted this year increased each day of rain or no field activity passes. There is a website www.ag.ndsu.edu/farmmanagement/preventplanting which provides articles on rules regarding prevented planting, the economics of the prevented planting decision, the impact of prevented planting on marketing plans, and a list of final planting dates for full crop insurance by county.

Dandelions and More

In 2009 the weed scientists at North Dakota State University chose dandelion as the weed-of-the-year. For ??? years, the dandelion has frustrated home owners. It has survived attacks from many fronts and is now beginning to challenge the patience of crop and forage growers.

Dandelion is a simple perennial weed that is most associated with undisturbed sites. Thus, continuous no-till fields are becoming attractive habitat for the weed.

For the homeowner, 2, 4-D amine is one of the safer herbicides. It is less volatile than the ester formulations, thus less likely to damage nearby sensitive plants found in vegetable and flower gardens. I have found a rate of three ounces of the four pound amine formulation mixed in a couple gallons of water and applied over 1000 square feet to be fairly effective. There are other more effective residual herbicides, but all present risks to trees and shrubs.

At the field crop level, the addition of residual herbicides will enhance the effectiveness of both glyphosate and 2,4-D. Unfortunately, some of these herbicides cannot be used in North Dakota because of their long residual interfering with broadleaf crop rotations. First Rate will suppress dandelion and give short-term residual control. Valor can provide dandelion seedling control; however, it will antagonize the control of glyphosate or 2,4-D on established dandelions.

We do not normally think of the fall season as being a good time of the year to control dandelions. However, NDSU research shows fall application of 2,4-D or glyphosate as being more effective than spring applications. Homeowners would not want to use glyphosate as this herbicide will devastate the lawn grasses.

Horse Vaccination Urged

Horse owners who participate in activities involving other horses are encouraged to have their horses' current on all vaccinations. In recent weeks at least 44 horses in nine western states have tested positive for the equine herpes virus, also known as EHV-1.

EHV-1 is a contagious disease that can cause respiratory or neurologic infection, abortion in mares and even death. It can be spread by air, through feed, clothing, boots and hands. Humans cannot contract the virus, but they can be a carrier. There are no vaccines available specifically for treatment of EHV-1.

The first sign of infection is a high temperature. Other symptoms include staggering, stumbling, head tilting or behavior changes. Rabies and West Nile have similar symptoms.