



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Hardin County Extension News Release

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Giant Ragweed, Maretail Top County Weeds

Hardin County – Each year before soybean harvest, county Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educators conduct a county weed survey. The purpose of this survey is to determine that type and amount of weeds that are infesting farm fields. Another reason is to develop an understanding of which weeds are becoming resistant to herbicides used by farmers. Once these determinations are made, weed scientists at The Ohio State University develop weed control programs which are then passed off to local county Extension Educators to make recommendations for local farmers. The goal of these recommendations is to help farmers gain control of these weeds so that their yield-limiting impact is reduced, increasing production and profitability for the farmer.

Hardin County's weed survey was conducted September 26 in the southern part of the county. The route taken was west on State Route 67, circling around the southern edge of the county, and returning from the east on State Route 67. September 27 the northern part of the county was surveyed, starting on State Route 53 going northeast. The route continued around the northern edge of the county and returned from the west on State Route 309. Stops were made every mile at each crossroad, checking the soybean fields from the road. Data on the type of weeds found and the degree of infestations were documented. This information was then summarized on a spreadsheet to be sent to the University. Details from this survey will be used as part of the pesticide recertification training meetings January through March around the West Central Ohio Region.

A total of 107 fields were surveyed in Hardin County this fall. Giant Ragweed was found to be a problem in 47 of these fields, followed by Maretail (Horseweed) (32), Giant Foxtail/grasses (20), Volunteer Corn (17), Common Lambsquarter (7), Redroot Pigweed (5), and Velvetleaf (2).

The highest degree of infestation in individual fields was Foxtail/grasses, Giant Ragweed, and Maretail. Twenty-four (22.4%) of the 107 soybean fields were found to be weed-free. Fields were evaluated as weed-free, occasional (occasional individual plants), large patches (patch of 8 or more plants scattered in field), or widespread (numerous patches or individual plants across the field) for each species in the field.

A future weed problem that farmers will need to understand is Waterhemp. This weed is a concern because it produces at least 100,000 seeds per plant, germinates throughout most of the season, and requires greater herbicide costs to properly manage. If farmers find Waterhemp in a field, they really should be treating it like Palmer amaranth. All that can be done now is to remove plants from the field by hand before harvest and prepare to manage Waterhemp better next season. The only way to reduce the frequency of Maretail in the county is to apply herbicides this fall.