

David Hallauer
District Extension Agent
Crops & Soils/Horticulture

2023 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide

One of the larger challenges landowners face is weed control. Some are noxious and require us to implement control measures. Some are just obnoxious. All of them deserve our attention if we are going to manage properties for more desirable species.

A good resource to help you do so is the 2023 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide. I'll refer to it often in this space during the growing season because it provides some great control recommendations for growers of our major commodity crops as well as range and pasture lands.

While the publication focuses on chemical control options for field crops (doing much more would make it very long...), it also includes herbicide premix charts and glyphosate product comparisons. There's a section on mode of action and even on sprayer cleanout. An added bonus in the range and pasture section is the inclusion of charts outlining other potential control options (mechanical, fire, etc...) plus grazing/haying restriction charts and an entire section devoted to noxious weed control.

If interested, visit any of our District Extension Offices. An online version is also available and can be accessed at: <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/chemweedguide.pdf>.

Wild Onion/Garlic

There's not a lot green in turfgrass stands right now, but one plant that has started to show up is wild onion or garlic. These cool season perennials start growing before turfgrass has broken dormancy, giving an unwanted disruption in uniformity of our turfgrass stands.

Both have slender, smooth leaves and produce a strong odor following mowing. Wild garlic has smooth, slender, hollow stems. Wild onion does not have a hollow stem and the shoots tend to be flat when looking at its cross section. Both arise from underground bulbs and bulblets, with garlic bulbs having a membranous papery coating and wild onion a fibrous reticulate coating. While a larger problem in poorly drained soils, they can show up about anywhere.

The best control program is prevention. Increasing soil organic matter and enhancing draining can help. Mow at an appropriate height and fertilize for optimum grass health so desired turf species can keep garlic/onion at bay.

Once it gets a foothold, control is more difficult. Frequent, close, early spring mowing *may* help reduce the vigor of these weeds but is probably impractical and runs the risk of harming turf species. Hand-digging is also impractical because of the extensive network of bulbs and bulblets in the ground.

Classified as broadleaf weeds, check common broadleaf weed product labels to see if garlic/onion are on them. Applications of herbicides containing 2,4-D, MCPP, and/or dicamba can be applied during early to mid-spring. The waxy cuticle on shoots and upright growth orientation make control difficult, so consider a non-ionic surfactant, wetting agent or sticker should with sprays for best results. Unlike other weeds, mowing immediately *prior* to application can help improve herbicide uptake and control.