

Glenn Nice

Bill Johnson

Tom Bauman

Purdue Extension Weed Science



Figure 1. Common pokeweed

For Free Herbicide Labels

www.cdms.net

and

www.greenbook.net

Purdue Extension

Knowledge to Go

1-888-EXT-INFO

Pokeweed Control

Similar to the last couple of years, we have observed a number of fields where common pokeweed really took off in early June. During this part of the growing season it is becoming a familiar sight of to see pokeweed and its red stems and large leaves standing like botanical sentries in our fields. By mid July however, we typically observe the brown to black corpses of common pokeweed after the postemergence herbicides have been applied...if herbicide treatments were made in a timely manner. However, since the weed is a perennial, it might be premature to claim victory on pokeweed at that point. You have probably won the battle, but not the war. The root balls of this perennial weed can be very large, as large as a bowling ball, making control of this weed fairly difficult with single postemergence herbicide treatments. Many of the healthy plants we see this year are new growth from root balls that persist from year to year. Another thing that makes pokeweed a management challenge is the fact that seeds can be dispersed by birds. The ripe fruit are eaten by birds and the seed pass through the birds and are dispersed wherever the birds decide to leave their mark.

Control of pokeweed in emerged soybeans.

Field studies by researchers at Southern Illinois University reported that glyphosate controlled pokeweed 88% or higher¹. Control was increased when glyphosate was tank mixed with FirstRate or Synchrony STS in soybean. FirstRate and Synchrony STS alone provided 68 and 38% control. So, specific recommendations would include the following: In Roundup Ready soybeans use at least 0.75 lb ae/A applied when pokeweed plants are at least 8 inches tall. Make a second application if necessary. In soybeans that are not Roundup Ready, use Synchrony STS (0.5 oz/A) or Classic + Harmony GT tankmixes. FirstRate seemed to provide similar control in the SIU studies, but we don't have quite as much experience with FirstRate on pokeweed than we do with Classic + Harmony GT.



Figure 2. Common pokeweed immature fruit. These fruit will turn into black berries with a juice that will stain grain.

Control of pokeweed in emerged corn.

In the same SIU report common pokeweed control in corn with Lightning; dicamba [Banvel, Clarity, Sterling]; Celebrity Plus; and Callisto (3 oz/A) was 90% or better. So specific recommendations would include the following: In Roundup Ready corn, use glyphosate (0.75 lb ae/A) when plants are at least 8 inches tall and make a

Pokeweed Control

June 8, 2005

second application if necessary. Other effective treatments for non-transgenic corn include Northstar, Yukon, dicamba (1 pt/A) and Distinct (4 to 6 oz/A), dicamba + Spirit, Callisto (3 oz/A). Apply when plants are less than 12 inches tall if possible.

Control of pokeweed in pastures and non-cropland.

Pokeweed in pastures or on non-crop areas can also be a problem. Pokeweed can be toxic to cattle, sheep, humans, turkeys, swine, and horses. For more information on pokeweed toxicity see the following web page (<http://www.vet.purdue.edu/depts/addl/toxic/plant40.htm>). In the same study mentioned above, glyphosate at 0.75 to 1 lb ae/A was used on 6, 12, 24, and 48 inch tall pokeweed. All treatments provided above 95% control but obviously would kill most other species including desirable grass forages. For grass pastures, Crossbow can provide the equivalent of 80% control with a 1.5% v/v mixture or 4 qt/A rate².

Since pokeweed is a perennial, the most effective technique for control will be to include fall herbicide applications in addition to in-crop treatments. Apply glyphosate + 2,4-D in the fall before the ground freezes if green leaf tissue is present to absorb the spray solution.

Reference:

1. Scott A. Nolte, Bryan G. Young and Gordon K. Roskamp. 2002. Common Pokeweed Control in Corn and Soybean. North Central Weed Science Society Abstracts 57:122.
2. Mark M. Loux, Jeff M. Stachler, Bill Johnson, Glenn Nice, and Tom Bauman. 2005. Weed Control Guide for Ohio and Indiana. Ohio State University.

Information listed here is based on research and outreach Extension programming at Purdue University and elsewhere. The use of trade names is for clarity to readers of this publication and does not imply endorsement of a particular brand nor does exclusion imply non-approval. Always consult herbicide labels for the most current and up-to-date precautions and restrictions. Copies, reproductions, or transcriptions of this document or its information must bear the statement "Produced and prepared by Purdue University Extension Weed Science" unless approval is given by the author.