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Multi-stemmed Brush Species – Roughleaf Dogwood

While buckbrush is more commonly known to producers, another troublesome multi-stemmed species of concern in grazing lands is roughleaf dogwood. Reaching heights of up to 15 feet, it is often found in fence rows and along streams, first, spreading in to open areas as well.

Roughleaf dogwood comes on later than buckbrush, often not exhibiting its flat topped clusters of white flowers until late May or early June. In native grass pastures where regular burning occurs, fire may have prevented it from even getting started. In cool season forage stands, or unburned warm season prairies, however, roughleaf dogwood becomes very difficult to remove once it gets established.

Herbicide applications can be effective from the flower bud state through early seed production. Many common herbicide active ingredients have some activity – but seldom result in what we'd consider acceptable control. In fact, research with single active ingredient products like triclopyr or dicamba or picloram, even in combination with 2,4-D, seldom result in mortalities greater than 25 percent. Even 'good' control isn't great, with high volume treatments of multiple active ingredient products resulting in around 50 percent control. Single applications, even of multiple active ingredient products, likely won't eliminate roughleaf dogwood in a single year, instead requiring a multi-year effort, possibly in combination with prescribed fire.

Herbicides may damage desirable grasses under the right conditions and all of the herbicides above will do significant damage to desirable legumes and other broadleaf forbs in forage stands. *Always* read and follow label directions prior to application. For additional information on rates/timings/products, request a copy of (or link to...) the 2021 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide available through any District Office.

Bagworm Scouting – Put it on the Calendar

I blame it on mowing. When we start mowing each week, we see the 'after effects' of the previous year – and it gets us to thinking about what's ahead.

One previous year's pests that is noticed each spring is bagworms. It's hard to miss them if your control program wasn't 100 percent effective last year (it never is) – inch and quarter long brown colored inverted cones hanging from branch ends. They aren't active right now, but it is time to start planning for the next hatch.

That hatch typically begins in mid-May in to early June. Larvae will emerge from bags over two to three weeks, starting as small foliage covered cones that blend in with their food source. During early stages of growth, they're easily controlled – and that means preparing now.

Mark your calendar to start scouting in mid-May. Monitor trees on a weekly basis for bags smaller than the end of a sharpened pencil. If pressure is already high or has been heavy in the past, consider initiation of control programs in fairly short order. If pressure is still low and past damage wasn't bad, you can delay a bit longer until more of the hatch has occurred. Don't let bags reach much more than a quarter of an inch long, or control may become difficult. Bagworms will hatch over three plus weeks – and feed for almost three months, so repeat applications may be necessary.

Now is *not* the time for application, but make a note on the calendar to start scouting. The feeding season will be here before we know it.