

Perennial sowthistle

Colorado Department of Agriculture

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Identification and Management



Perennial sowthistle produces by seeds and the rhizometous root systems. Plants overwinter and begin to appear in early spring, seeds will germinate at this same time. Plants are palatable to grazing animals and can assist in control.

The key to effective control of Perennial sowthistle preventing the establishment of the plant populations. Reducing the production of seeds can assist in the control of Perennial sowthistle. Mechanical, chemical and grazing controls will also assist in control plant populations. Details on the back of this sheet can help to create a management plan compatible with your site ecology.

Identification and Impacts

Perennial sowthistle (*Sonchus arvensis*) is a perennial for native to Eurasia. The plants erect stems can grow 2 to 5 feet tall, they are hollow, and have a milky juice that appears when the plant is injured. The plant branches near the top of the stem and will exhibit a showy yellow disc flower about 1 1/2 inches in size, and resembles a dandelion. The flowers are borne out of bracts that are sticky and slightly hairy. Seeds are produced out of the flower bract and are red to brown in color, and have ribs that run lengthwise on the seed. The seeds are connected to a silky, parachute-like tuft of white hair and travel very easily in the wind. Leaves of the plant are alternate and clasping to the stem. The leaves vary in size generally getting smaller the higher up on the stem. Leaves are deeply lobed to whole and have prickly margins. Perennial sowthistle grows from a deep-taproot that exhibits horizontal rizome-like roots that will produce other stems.

Perennial sowthistle is designated as a "List C" species on the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. It is required to be either eradicated, contained, or suppressed depending on the local jurisdictions managing this species. For more information, visit www.colorado.gov/ag/weeds or call the State Weed Coordinator at the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Conservation Services Division, 303-239-4100.



Key ID Points

Habitats for Perennial sowthistle include roadsides, fertile waste areas, cultivated fields, gardens, woods, lawns, ditches, and rivers.



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Sonchus arvensis

**CULTURAL**

Maintaining healthy plant populations and minimizing disturbance is a good way prevent weed populations. For specific seed recommendations contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Services for seed mixes.

**BIOLOGICAL**

Currently there is not any biocontrol available for Common burdock. Biocontrol takes many years of research and development. For more information, contact the Palisade Insectary of the Colorado Department of Agriculture at 970-464-7916.

**MECHANICAL**

Tilling plant populations where possible can assist with controlling Perennial sowthistle. Smaller root fragments have a harder time producing viable rosettes. The optimum time to treat mechanically is in the leaf rosette stage. Mowing can assist with control in depleting the root reserves for the plants.

Integrated Weed Management:

Combining mechanical and chemical control methods can assist with controlling Perennial sowthistle. Plant are palatable to grazing animals, this can also assist in controlling plant populations.

HERBICIDES

NOTE: The following are recommendations for herbicides that can be applied to range and pasturelands. Rates are approximate and based on equipment with an output of 30 gal/acre. Please read label for exact rates. Always read, understand, and follow the label directions. The herbicide label is the LAW!

HERBICIDE	RATE	APPLICATION TIMING
2 4-D + Dicamba (Rangestar)	1 to 2 pt/acre	Apply to rosettes or early bolting stage. Add non-ionic surfactant @ 0.32 oz/gal of water or 1 pt/100 gal of water.
Aminopyralid (Milestone)	3 to 5 oz/acre	Apply to rosettes or early growth under favorable growing conditions. Add non-ionic surfactant @ 0.32 oz/gal of water or 1 pt/100 gal of water.
Clopyralid (Stinger)	5 to 11 oz/acre	Apply to rosette to bud stages of plant growth. Add non-ionic surfactant @ 0.32 oz/gal of water or 1 pt/100 gal of water.
Picloram (Tordon 22K *this is a restricted use herbicide*)	4 pt/acre	Apply to rosette to early bolting stage. Add non-ionic surfactant @ 0.32 oz/gal of water or 1 pt/100 gal of water.

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