

Management key to controlling noxious weeds

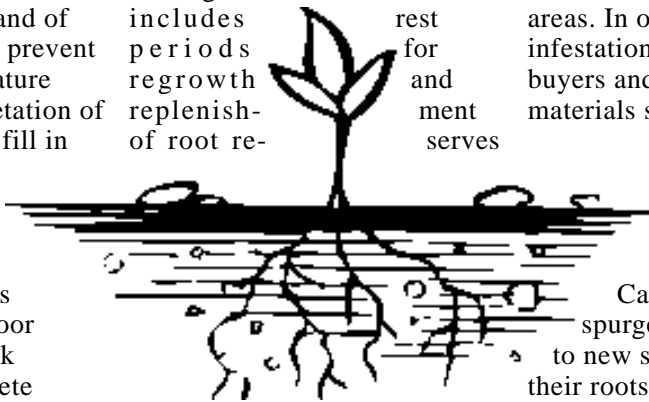
In Nebraska, state law requires every landowner to control noxious weeds on their property. While there are several effective methods for controlling noxious weeds, adopting management practices that prevent their occurrence and spread will significantly reduce the time and effort required to control them.

One of the most important management practices for controlling noxious weeds is to maintain a vigorous stand of desirable vegetation to prevent their establishment. Nature abhors a vacuum. Vegetation of some type will tend to fill in bare areas or areas that are sparsely vegetated. The sites in the county with the most persistent noxious weed problems have poor stands of grass that lack vigor and do not compete well with invading weeds, especially the non-native, aggressive, noxious weeds. The establishment of a vigorous stand of desirable vegetation on these sites will help reduce the population of noxious weeds and the amount of effort required to control them.

The best approach to getting a good grass stand is to prepare a good seedbed, seed with a drill and provide adequate weed control until the grass is established. In some

situations, especially if the area is severely eroded, it may be necessary to incorporate fertilizer and/or organic matter to insure a good stand.

Once the grass is established, proper management and utilization is the key to maintaining a vigorous stand. If the area is being grazed, be careful not to over-graze. Over-grazing reduces the vigor and competitiveness of grass. Grazing management that includes rest periods and regrowth replenishment serves



will help maintain a vigorous stand that will compete well with noxious weeds. It is also important to remember that many of the cool season grasses, such as smooth brome grass, need to be fertilized in order to maintain their productivity and vigor. Contact the Extension Office or the Natural Resources Conservation Service for assistance in establishing and maintaining a vigorous stand of grass and other vegetation.

Another key to controlling the spread of noxious weeds is to prevent the dissemination of seeds and viable plant parts to non-infested sites. Noxious weeds produce large quantities of seed that can remain viable for many years until the conditions are right for germination. Noxious weeds are spread when seed, hay, topsoil, sod, nursery stock and compost materials that contain weed seed are used in non-infested areas. In order to prevent new infestations of noxious weeds, buyers and users of these materials should insist that

they are weed free. While musk thistle and plumeless thistle are spread only by seed, Canada thistle and leafy spurge can also be spread to new sites by segments of their roots. To prevent this from occurring, any machinery that has been used in a noxious weed infested area should be thoroughly cleaned before it is moved to a new site.

Controlling noxious weeds is one of the topics that will be discussed at the Rural Living Clinic on Saturday, February 28. Additional information can also be obtained by contacting the Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Authority at 441-7817. (SCB)

Acreage Insights



New Acreage Owner's Guide now available

A new guide for acreage owners entitled "A Place in the Country: The Acreage Owner's Guide" is available. The guide was developed by a team of Extension educators to answer many of the commonly asked questions regarding buying and living on an acreage. The booklet is divided into 12 color coded sections covering a variety of topics ranging from "Assessing the Rural Life" and "Knowing Your Responsibilities" to "Handling Waste Water," "Controlling Pests" and "Living with Wildlife". It also includes a section on things you should know as a Nebraska landowner and who you should contact for more information. If you would like a copy of the guide, contact the Lancaster County Extension Office. Cost of the publication is \$1.00 plus postage. (SCB)

4th Annual Acreage Owner/Rural Living Workshop scheduled

The 4th Annual Acreage Owner/Rural Living Workshop will be held Saturday, March 7, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the University of Nebraska Agricultural Research and Development Center (ARDC) - Research and Education Building near Mead (see map). The workshop will feature presentations by several University and Extension personnel on a variety of topics including: Planning Your Acreage, Establishing Native Prairies, Vegetable Gardening, Pest Control, Planting Trees for Wildlife, Tree Maintenance, Management Systems for Horses and Lease Agreements. There will also be educational displays and commercial exhibits addressing the specific needs of acreage owners and small farm operators. There is no registration fee for the workshop and preregistration is not required. Lunch and snack items will be available for purchase at the workshop. For additional information, contact the Lancaster County Extension Office. (SCB)

Rural Living Workshop

Whether you are just thinking of moving from the city to the country or have lived on an acreage for years, there is still plenty to learn about living in a rural setting. If you have questions and concerns about making this drastic change in your living style, you gain by the experience of others at this sharing session designed for acreage owners. Topics to be discussed include: adjusting to your new environment, how to landscape, planning a wind-break, seeding for wildlife, learning the facts about limited services, tips on utilization of extra acres, regulations covering weed control and many more items of interest.

The Acreage Owners Workshop will be Saturday, February 28, 1998. This activity will begin at 10:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:00 p.m. with a brown bag lunch discussion at noon. Registration cost is \$5.00 per person which includes lunch from Brown Baggers and refreshments. Advanced registration should be made by calling 441-7180 or E-mail cnty5021@unlvm.unl.edu no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday, February 27. Late registrations and walk-ins may not be guaranteed a lunch. (WS)

HELP! Your input is needed.

In order to make the Acreage Section of the NEBLINE more responsive to your needs, we would like to know what articles or topics you would like to see in this section. We are also considering including a question and answer feature where we will try to find answers to your questions and print them in a future issue of the NEBLINE. Please send your comments, suggestions or questions to the NEBLINE Acreage Editor, Lancaster County Extension Office, 444 Cherrycreek Rd., Lincoln, NE 68528-1507, or call 441-7180. Thanks for your help. (SCB)

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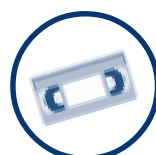
Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web Site

Visit our Internet web site at: <http://ianrwww.unl.edu/ianr/lanco/ag/acreage> to learn about Extension programs, publications and links to other acreage and small farm information.



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