

## Invasive Annual Grass Species Control

Cheatgrass, wild oats, Medusahead, downy brome, crabgrass, Johnsongrass, quackgrass, Japanese brome...whatever you may refer to them as, the list of invasive annual grass species is long and unfortunately getting longer. Thankfully, there are a few tools to address this challenge and keep these species off the noxious weed list. They are herbicides, seeding, prescribed fire, biological control, and grazing. Depending on cost, location, availability of resources, and species, any combination could be right for you and your operation. Goals differ as well but should center around perennial species reestablishment and maintaining diversity.

Chemical control is the most widely used control method of invasive annual grasses. While it is the most widely used, it is also the most regulated. It is important to know your desired results and the growth stage of the plants you are trying to control before selecting an herbicide. Always read and adhere to herbicide labels. If you have questions, consult with your local extension office.

Seeding native species may sound like a daunting task, but technology has made it much more accessible to smaller operations. Native seed can be purchased directly from distributors very similar to the way row crop seed is purchased. If possible, purchase certified seed. Certified seed will have a blue tag. Seeding is most critical after a major disturbance event such as fire, to prevent erosion.

Grazing may be the most accessible tool to western Kansas. Target or strategic grazing refers to grazing livestock at specific points of plant growth to stunt or end growth and promote growth of more desirable species. This is a very popular control method for cheatgrass. Many of the invasive annual grass species have little nutrient value after maturing, so this allows producers to get some value out of them.

Whatever the goals of your operation are, there is a variety of invasive annual grass species control options to fit it. Herbicides, seeding, prescribed fire, biological control, and grazing are just a few of them available. Have questions or need more information? Stop by your local Twin Creeks Extension office!