

Weed Control District focusing on IPM strategies

What is IPM?

IPM stands for Integrated Pest Management. It is the theory of combining several different methods or strategies to combat a given pest. IPM can be divided into five main categories or methods of control: Prevention, Biological, Cultural, Mechanical and Chemical.

The Morrow County Noxious Weed Control District is trying to implement all of these methods in one form or another into its work plan. The idea being that no one method will solve any weed problem but if several methods are employed then the chances for success will be greatly increased.

Prevention, the first of these methods, is the most important strategy and if faithfully adhered to is the cheapest. Prevention involves being able to identify new invaders and prevent them from becoming established. For the weed control district, prevention also includes public education as well as enforcement of the state and county weed laws.

The next method, biological control, involves the management of animals, insects and other organisms to feed upon or otherwise reduce the weeds ability to reproduce. While biological controls may be slow to establish, several success stories such as the tansy ragwort flea beetle and cinabar moth make this

method one worth pursuing. The most notable success story in Morrow County has been the defoliating moth (*Agonopterix alstroemeriana*) which attacks poison hemlock. Other biological controls have been distributed in Morrow County to work on weeds such as St Johnswort, diffuse knapweed, yellow starthistle and Canada thistle. Cultural control involves numerous components to minimize the impact of weeds. One such component is the idea of competitive plantings. Grass seeding (hydroseeding) roadsides following construction work is one such method being used by the Weed District in order to establish grass in areas which would otherwise be filled in by weeds such as kochia and Russian thistle.

Mechanical or manual methods are also control weeds. Hand pulling and hoeing are used in the Umatilla National Forest to help control tansy ragwort and diffuse knapweed found mostly along roadsides.

The last of the IPM methods and probably the most widely used involves the use of herbicides. While this method often seems to be the most effective, it should be used in conjunction with other methods mentioned to increase overall effectiveness and hopefully reduce the dependence on chemicals for the future.

While IPM is not a new concept it should be looked at and used by more landowners and operators. With the increasing loss of herbicides due to environmental concerns it makes sense to start an IPM program now. Keep in mind while developing your own IPM program that no one method should be used by itself. By incorporating several methods, weed control effectiveness will be greatly increased and long-term costs reduced.

MSWCD's mission to conserve and protect

The mission and purpose of the Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District is to conserve, protect and develop soil and water resources, to provide for sustained use of natural resources and to assist and cooperate in the conservation, protection and development of all natural resources of Morrow County for the economic and environmental benefit of the people of the county. Current resource inventories will be used within the district.

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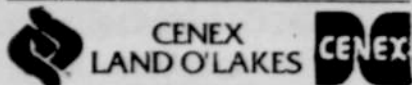
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