



Hoary Cress

Cardaria draba



- Perennial, Grows 1-2 feet tall
- Common names: Tall Whitetop
- Blooms in late spring
- Grows in waste areas, pastures, fence lines, and right of ways

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Suggested Control Methods for Hoary Cress

Chemical Control

Timing: Herbicides are most effective when applied to actively growing plants in the spring (bud to early bloom stage) or to new rosettes in the fall. Application during these stages maximizes the movement of the herbicide to the root system, where the plant stores energy.

Recommended Herbicides: Effective active ingredients include metsulfuron-methyl, chlorsulfuron, and dicamba, in combination with 2,4-D.

A surfactant is essential to help the chemical penetrate the plant's hairy leaves.

Mechanical/ Cultural Control

Hand-pulling/Digging is only effective for very small, new infestations where the entire, deep root system (which can extend over 18 feet) can be removed completely. Leaving root fragments will produce new plants.

Tillage can be effective only if it is at least six inches deep and repeated every 10-14 days for 2-4 years to exhaust the root system's energy reserves.

Mowing alone is ineffective for long-term control, but repeated mowing during the summer can reduce biomass and seed production and can be combined with a fall herbicide application for better results.

Prevention is the most effective strategy: use certified weed-free seed and hay, and clean machinery thoroughly before moving from infested to clean areas.

Grazing with sheep or goats may reduce hoary cress, as they are more likely to eat it than cattle, who may be poisoned by a compound in the plant.

Competitive planting of aggressive legumes, such as alfalfa, can help suppress hoary cress by competing for resources.

Smothering with cardboard and a 3-inch layer of mulch or clear plastic sheeting can work for small areas in residential settings.