

# Weed Awareness

## Weed Control Web site

The Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Authority Web site, [www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/cnty/weeds](http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/cnty/weeds) provides very useful information about the Authority's program and activities and about weed control and management. The site received over 25,000 hits in 2001.

- Via the Web site, you can:
- Contact the Noxious Weed Control Authority.
  - Make a weed complaint.
  - Make a real-time search of current weed inspections.
  - Look at a map of noxious weed locations in the county.
  - See the latest listing of possible weed special assessments.
  - Study noxious weed and weed abatement laws and regulations.
  - Learn about noxious weed identification.
  - Read about the County Noxious Weed and City Weed Abatement Programs.
  - See plans and reports.
  - Check on noxious weed controls.
  - Learn about managing natural areas in an urban setting.
  - Test your knowledge about Nebraska weeds.



The site is continually being updated. The "Current Weed Inspections" search has just been added. By clicking on "Current Weed Inspections," anyone will be able to get information on any or all of our active ongoing weed inspections. The search will show the inspection number, weed type, parcel identification number, owners name, situs address, complaint date, first inspection date and the date that the landowner was contacted in person, by mail or publication of notice.

### Links to Other Weed Control Web Sites:

- Nebraska Weed Control Association: [www.neweed.org](http://www.neweed.org)
- North American Weed Management Association: [www.nawma.org](http://www.nawma.org)
- Federal Noxious Weed Program: [www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/weeds](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/weeds)

## 2002 Weed Control Plan

The Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Authority has outlined the following for 2002:

### Inspection Activity

The Authority estimates that it will make approximately 9,000 inspections of 4,000 sites to encourage landowners to manage their noxious weeds and provide for weed abatement.

The Authority will make inspection services available to those who request the inspection of articles capable of disseminating noxious weeds.

The Authority will also will make weed free forage inspections. A certificate and tags will be provided to allow for shipment and/or sale within or outside the state. Weed free certified hay often can be sold at a premium price.

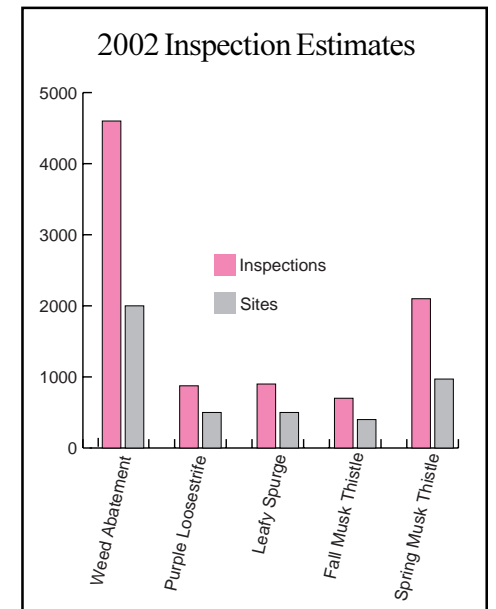
### Prevent New Weed Problems

Efforts are planned to:

1. detect new occurrences of noxious weeds or plant species with noxious weed potential
2. respond to new occurrences found
3. prevent existing noxious weed infestations to new sites

Four invasive weeds have been selected for early detection, monitoring and response (see article below):

- Sericea Lespedeza
- Johnsongrass



- Diffuse Knapweed
- Spotted Knapweed

### Prevent Spread of Noxious Weeds

Controlling noxious weeds on currently infested sites is very difficult. It takes a multi-year effort with persistence and several follow-up efforts each year. Efforts to prevent new sites from becoming infested are much easier and very cost effective. Even though prevention is simpler and obviously a good approach, prevention efforts have not become a common practice.

### Increase Public Awareness

The Authority will continue efforts to educate landowners about noxious weeds and weed prevention.

## Weeds That May Become Threats in Lancaster County

Four invasive weeds have been selected for early detection, monitoring and response by the Lancaster County Noxious Weed Control Authority. Landowners are asked to contact the Authority at 441-7817 if any of the following weeds are spotted:

### Sericea Lespedeza

Sericea Lespedeza is a perennial that grows to five feet tall. The stems are erect with small hairs laying flat along the ridges on the stem. Leaves have three leaflets that are 1 to 1-1/2 inches long and less than 1/4 to 1/2 inch wide with the larger leaflets on the lower portion of the stem. They are wedge-shaped with small flat hairs on the lower surface. There are one to four flowers in the axils of the leaves with petals whitish to light yellow and may be tinged with purple.

Sericea Lespedeza was introduced to the United States from China in 1900 for erosion control. It contains tannin, which makes that plant essentially unpalatable to livestock with the exception of sheep and goats.



**Sericea Lespedeza**

Animals and the movement of infested hay spread

Sericea Lespedeza. This plant is tolerant to drought. The seed may remain viable for more than 20 years.

Sericea Lespedeza is a major problem in Kansas where it has been designated a noxious weed. It has been found in southeast Nebraska and Lancaster County.

### Johnsongrass

Johnsongrass is an introduced, creeping perennial that reproduces by seeds and stout horizontal rhizomes. The stems are erect. The plant may grow from two to eight feet tall. The stems are smooth, pithy, stout and leafy. The leaf blades are flat and have conspicuous midveins. The flowers and seeds are in



**Johnsongrass**

large, open, reddish-purple panicles.

These grasses have escaped cultivation and become troublesome agricultural weeds in temperate to tropical regions throughout the world. Johnsongrass grows rapidly, is highly competitive with crops and can be difficult to control. Infestations in crops can reduce harvest yields significantly. It has been designated a noxious weed in 18 states.

Johnsongrass has not been considered a problem this far north. It has been found in Lancaster County and has persisted.

### Spotted Knapweed and Diffuse Knapweed

Spotted Knapweed and



**Spotted Knapweed**

Diffuse Knapweed are native to central Europe.

Spotted Knapweed is a simple perennial that reproduces from seed and forms a new shoot each year from a taproot. The plant can have one or more shoots up to four feet tall. Rosette leaves can be six inches long and deeply lobed. Leaves on shoots are smaller and finely divided, becoming smaller toward the top of the shoot and are covered with fine hair. Flowering heads are solitary and occur on shoot tips. They are up to one inch in diameter. Flower color usually is lavender to purple. Seed head bracts are stiff and black tipped, with five to seven pairs of short, feathery appendages. Seeds germinate in spring or fall. Perennial plants resume growth in early spring.



**Diffuse Knapweed**

Flowering occurs throughout the summer into fall.

Diffuse Knapweed is similar but has white to rose or purple flowers. The bracts surrounding each flower bear four to five pairs of lateral spines and one, long terminal spine.

Spotted Knapweed and Diffuse Knapweed have both been designated noxious weeds in Nebraska and have been found in north central and northeast Nebraska in rangeland, meadows and roadsides, especially sandy soils. They both could potentially be problem weeds in Lancaster County.