



Farm Views

Pesticide Disposal Program a Success



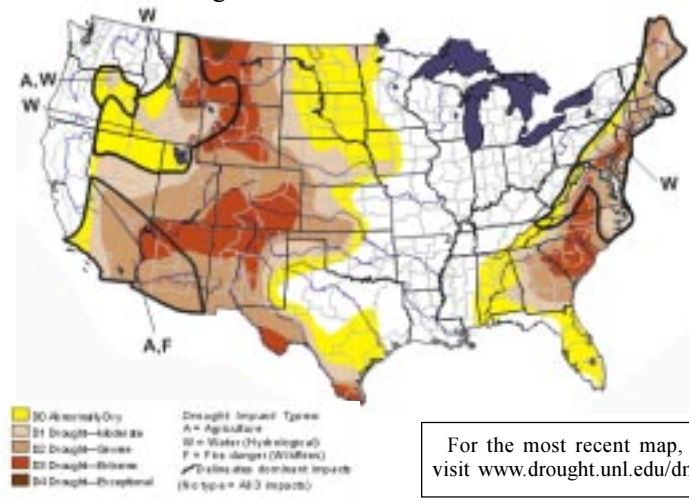
Extension Educator Tom Dorn stands next to sealed barrels containing pesticides collected for disposal at the Farmers Coop in Waverly.

A pesticide disposal collection was held on March 22 at the Farmers Cooperative in Waverly. Farmers, homeowners and businesses were invited to bring in pesticides that were no longer registered for use, outdated or damaged or simply no longer being used in the operation. The pesticides were grouped by type, packed for transport and taken to a licensed incineration facility for proper disposal. A reported 14,404 pounds of pesticides were collected at the Waverly location. There were five such collection sites in the 21-county Southeast Nebraska Extension District. In all, 53,794 pounds of pesticides were collected district-wide. Other collection sites across the state had collected over 30,000 additional pounds of pesticides at last report, with more sites sched-

uled in western and northern Nebraska. This project was made possible through cooperation of many agencies, businesses and individuals. The Nebraska Agri-Business Association (previously known as the Nebraska Fertilizer and Ag-Chemical Institute) received a grant from the Environmental Trust Fund and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality received grant funds from the Environmental Protection Agency, these funds provided the framework for the project. Rich Reiman from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture coordinated the project statewide. Cooperative Extension provided local coordination and promotion and Farmers Cooperative volunteered the use of their chemical and fertilizer load-out facility. (TD)

Latest U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of April 30, Lancaster County borders on Abnormally Dry to Moderate Drought conditions.



For the most recent map, visit www.drought.unl.edu/dm

Cattail Control in Sewage Lagoons

This article will discuss four approaches for controlling cattails in sewage lagoons, two non-chemical and two using chemicals.

Removing the tops

One can keep cattails in check and eventually obtain control by repeatedly cutting the tops below the water line or cutting, then submerging by raising the water level. Research in Iowa (Weller, 1975) found that cutting shoots two or three times during the growing season before flower production reduced a cattail stand by 95–99% in one year. A single cutting in August followed by submergence resulted in 80% control. It is important to remove all dead and live cattail stems to achieve this control.

Power equipment that has been used to cut cattails includes sickle mowers and hand operated power trimmers equipped with metal cutting wheels instead of strings. Hand scythes, machetes (corn knives) and long-handled shovels also have been used to manually cut cattails that are close to the shoreline.

Hand pulling

Where feasible to do, pulling rather than cutting, will result in faster control because one is removing the structures where energy is stored by the plant (crowns, rhizomes and roots). Repeated pulling so the plants never grow taller than three feet above the water

surface will prevent seed production. Sometimes the rhizomes become so intertwined, it is nearly impossible to pull the plants out by their roots. In this case, use a shovel to first divide the clumps into square foot sections and then pull them.

Using a contact herbicide

A contact herbicide only kills the green tissue that comes in contact with the herbicide. It does not translocate to (move to) other parts of the plant as in the case of a systemic herbicide. Thorough coverage of the green tissue is essential for effective control. Expect plants to regrow from the roots. Treat three to four times during the growing season to prevent seed production and to eventually starve the root system.

For each 1,000 ft² of surface area treated, use:
3 Tbsp (1.5 fl oz) **Reward™** + 3 Tbsp non-ionic surfactant in 2¼ gallons of water.
See last paragraph for more information.

Using a systemic herbicide

Systemic herbicides applied to the foliage are absorbed into the plant tissues and then translocated (moved) throughout the entire plant. Cattails are most susceptible to systemic herbicides during growth stages when the plant is translocating

larger amounts of photosynthate into the root system. The optimum treatment period is from boot stage (noticeable bulge caused by the flowering structure growing up through its protective sheath) to early flowering (green cattail head freshly emerged from the boot).

For each 1,000 ft² of surface area treated use:
9 Tbsp (4.5 fl oz) **2,4-D ester** (4L) + 3 Tbsp Methylated seed oil (MSO) or 3 Tbsp Crop Oil Concentrate (COC) in 3½ gallons of water
- or -
4½ Tbsp (2.25 fl oz) aquatic glyphosate (**Aquamaster™** or **Rodeo™**) + 3 Tbsp non-ionic surfactant (X-77 or equivalent) in 2¼ gallons of water

Mention of trade names in this educational resource is for clarification only and should not be interpreted as an endorsement by the University of Nebraska or Lancaster County Extension.

Products mentioned can be purchased at most major garden supply centers, landscape nurseries or from agricultural chemical suppliers.

Apply herbicide mixtures to the green foliage, not to the water in the lagoon, using a pressurized hand sprayer. Be sure to read and follow all label directions. For information on calibrating a hand-held sprayer call 441-7180 and ask for educational resource “Calibrating a hand-held sprayer,” (026-99) or visit online at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/ag/crops/handspray.pdf>.

Storage Methods to Reduce Hay Losses

The National Drought Mitigation Center shows much of the western great plains and Rocky Mountains in a moderate to severe drought, including nearly the entire state of Nebraska. Hay could be selling at a premium this year. It is even more important to minimize losses from spoilage and to maintain nutrient quality. Dr. Bruce Anderson, extension forage specialist at UNL, suggests some practical ways to minimize hay losses.

Hay stored outside will be damaged by rain, snow, wind and ice. If possible, store hay inside or cover it with a canvas or plastic tarp. Did you know the average round bale stored out in the weather loses about 1/4 of its original nutrients during storage? There are some simple management techniques that can reduce this loss. For

instance, do you usually line up round bales so the twine sides touch each other? Or stack your bales? If so, extra spoilage will occur where these bales touch because rain, snow and ice will gather in these spots instead of running off. Round bales butted end-to-end, cigar-like, usually have less spoilage because there are no “valleys” to collect moisture.

It may seem remote when you are putting up hay in the heat of summer, but think about where snow tends to drift before deciding where to store bales in the field. Prevailing winter winds are from the north or northwest in eastern Nebraska. Placing hay next to fence lines or trees can result in their being engulfed in snow drifts later on.

Even when placed on open ground, round bales in east-west rows often have drifts on the

south side. As snow melts, it soaks into the bales or makes the ground muddy. Besides, the north side never gets any sun so it’s slow to dry. Bales that are oriented north-south will cause fewer drifts to form next to the bales and the hay will dry more quickly because the sun and prevailing winds will hit both sides of the row.

Most important is the bottom of your bales. Always put bales on higher, well-drained ground so water drains away from them. Besides placing them on higher ground, if possible, place the bales on a bed of crushed rock, on railroad ties or on pallets to keep the bottoms dry. This will also reduce problems getting to your hay or getting it moved due to snow drifts or mud. Just a little pre-planning can save valuable hay and frustrations next winter. (TD)

Annual Observed Precipitation — Lincoln, NE (in inches, 1887-2001)

