

News Column

Stacy Campbell

K-State Research & Extension

January 30, 2015

Kochia control in early spring is crucial

Producers should begin soon in planning their program for controlling kochia. The spread of glyphosate-resistant kochia populations throughout western Kansas, and the difficulty growers have had controlling these populations, suggest that perhaps control measure should begin prior to emergence of kochia.

Major flushes of kochia emerge in early March and into April. If allowed to emerge, postemergence herbicide applications often will not provide adequate control. Incomplete control of dense populations is likely in these situations. When the kochia is glyphosate-resistant and complete herbicide coverage is not possible, results can be very poor when trying to use postemergence products to control dense populations. The dense populations may also be stressed, which reduces the effectiveness of postemergence herbicide applications.

The choice of herbicides for effective preemergence control of kochia in late February and early March will vary depending on subsequent cropping intentions.

Note: Control recommendations in this article are based on data from irrigated plots at the K-State Southwest Research-Extension Center at Tribune, and with populations of kochia that are susceptible to triazines. The kochia at this site is a mixed population of glyphosate-resistant and susceptible plants.

Fields going to corn or sorghum this spring

For fields that will be planted to corn and sorghum this spring, a combination of glyphosate (using a minimum of 0.75 lb ae/acre) with herbicides that have PRE and POST activity on kochia is most valuable. Tank mixing 8 to 16 oz of dicamba with or 1 to 2 pints of atrazine will control small kochia, and other existing broadleaf and grass weeds, and will provide extended preemergence control into May. An application of Clarity alone suggests that a pint provides better control than 8 oz, however a combination of atrazine and Clarity is better than Clarity alone.

The best timing for this application is late February to the first week or two of March. The later it gets, the more likely it is there will be some small, emerged kochia, which increases the risk of failure. If producers wait until later to apply the burndown and preemergence herbicide in the same application, the kochia will be larger and most likely will not be controlled. If that occurs, the surviving plants will go on to cause problems throughout the growing season.

Other herbicides that could be tankmixed with the glyphosate ahead of corn or sorghum include Lexar EZ or Lumax EZ, or for corn only 3 to 4 fl oz of Corvus, Balance Flexx, or 1.5 to 2.5 oz of Scoparia herbicide. The addition of atrazine is key for most effective control with these herbicides. The addition of Banvel did not increase kochia control with Corvus+atrazine or Balance Flexx+atrazine in 2012. When marginal rainfall is received for the initial activation, Banvel, which is very soluble, is able to be activated and provide significant kochia control while atrazine and other herbicides may not be activated. This buys time for additional rainfall and full activation of all the herbicides.