



Weed Control For Horse Pasture

Weeds in horse pastures are usually the result of poor pasture management and overgrazing. Pastures should be grazed when grasses are 6 inches tall, and rested when grasses are grazed down to 3 inches. When pastures are grazed below 3 inches, the grass dies because it does not have the opportunity to replace energy reserves for regrowth. Overgrazed and bare areas provide the opportunity for weeds to move in. Weeds reduce the nutritional value of pastures and some common pasture weeds, such as buttercup, are toxic to horses. Properly managed pastures will have fewer weeds and provide optimal nutrition for horses.

Weed Prevention

- Maintain appropriate stocking rate of at least 2 acres per horse
- Do not graze pastures below 3 inches
- Do not graze newly planted pastures until grass is at least 6 inches tall
- Soil test every three years to maintain soil fertility and pH
- Apply lime and fertilizer according to soil tests
- Clip or mow pastures regularly to keep grasses productive
- Pastures with dense stands of grass will choke out weeds

Weed Control with Herbicides

- Herbicides can be used on grass pastures to control broadleaf weeds

- Type of herbicide and timing of application depend on type of weeds
- Follow label instructions and recommendations
- Apply herbicides after at least three days of air temperatures above 60°F
- Do not apply herbicides on windy days
- Do not apply herbicides if there is a chance of rain within 24 hours
- Herbicides are only effective after weeds have emerged, but before they flower (ie. once you see the yellow buttercup flower its too late)
- Removal of horses from pasture is not required for most broadleaf herbicides
- If toxic weeds are present, horses should be removed from pastures 7 days following herbicide application (this is because toxic weeds can become more palatable following herbicide use)

Contact your [county Extension office](#) for more information on weed control for horse pastures. For more details on pastures and forages online visit: <http://forages.tennessee.edu/default.html>