



FACT SHEET

TEASEL

(Dipsacus fullonum)

- **Teasel** grows 4 to 6 feet tall at maturity.
- Basal leaves are oval and wrinkled, 6-12 inches long, forming a large low rosette.
- The basal leaves usually die in the second year.



Teasel rosettes—Image courtesy of Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org



- The stems are prickly and prickles increase towards the top.
- The stem leaves are up to 10 inches long; they clasp the stem and form “cups” that may hold water.
- The leaves have rigid spines along the underside midrib.
- Dense egg-shaped flowerheads about four inches long appear in July through September. They are usually purple, with conspicuous prickly bracts.



WHY BE CONCERNED?

- Teasel will quickly invade disturbed or over-grazed roadsides and pastures.
- It is not palatable, is generally ignored by livestock and decreases forage availability.
- It is very competitive because the ground-hugging rosettes (see picture above) exclude other plants. It also has deep roots (over two feet long) and plentiful seed production (2,000 seeds per plant).

DISTRIBUTION:

Teasel is common on roadsides and pastures throughout east Jefferson County and is spreading rapidly.

ECOLOGY:

- Teasel has been grown as an ornamental and in the past it was used in dried flower arrangements. These were sometimes placed in cemeteries, from which seeds may have spread.
- It is a biennial or short-lived perennial that reproduces by seed and then dies.

CONTROL

Prevention and early detection are the best means of control!

- **Use** weed free hay and seed; avoid bringing in weed contaminated soil.
- **Clean** equipment that has been used in infested areas.
- **Remove** seedlings when young; rosettes can usually be pulled or dug easily.
- **Replant** newly weeded areas with desirable (preferably native) plant species that will discourage reinfestation.
- **Dispose** of weeds properly; bag or burn seed heads.
- **Monitor** the site for several years; promptly remove new seedlings.

HANDPULLING or DIGGING work best early in the year. The rosettes are easy to see, the soil is moist, plants are small and come out easily and there are no seeds to worry about. If plants are dug when in bloom the flowerheads should be cut, bagged and taken to the landfill. If left on site they will produce seed.

CUTTING blooming plants at or just below ground level can be effective. They will not normally re-sprout. This control method may need to be repeated for several years and flowerheads should be disposed of, as above.

MOWING is **not** recommended because it will not kill plants and may spread seeds.

- **Wear protective clothing and gloves when dealing with this plant!!!**

HERBICIDES can be effective, but should always be applied with care. Do not apply herbicides over or near water bodies. Read the label to check that you are applying a herbicide in the right place, to the right plant, at the right time, and in the right amount. For perennial weeds, long term control requires stopping seed production **and** attacking the weed's root system. Translocated herbicides, (ones that move throughout a plant's system) are recommended. These are most effective on young, actively growing plants because the herbicide moves around the plant more quickly. Also, herbicide is more easily absorbed by clean, new leaves.

- **Note:** Most herbicides will **NOT** prevent germination of weed seeds already in the soil, so monitoring and retreatment are necessary.

Call the Weed Board for specific herbicide advice.