

Boulder County Small Acreage Management Newsletter



Fall 2019

<http://boulder.extension.colostate.edu/natural-resources/>

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From the SAM Coordinator

While we started the year out with lots of precipitation and we are still ahead of precipitation for the year, we seem to be lacking moisture lately. As you'll see on the drought monitor, parts of the state are experiencing dry conditions or a moderate level of drought.

Let's hope that we will receive plenty of snow this fall and winter and keep the state out of drought.

Thank you,
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SAM Newsletters Online

View previous newsletters via the SAM link above.

SAM Email Listserv

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time and are not subscribed to the Small Acreage listserv, you may request subscription by contacting the Small Acreage Coordinator sbokan@bouldercounty.org. This quarterly e-newsletter and other timely info will be distributed via this email listserv.

Subscribers may use the listserv also as a SAM info gathering mechanism. For example, you may inquire about who is available in the area supply hay, to perform swathing/baling, etc. The listserv is not a marketplace, however. Because it is hosted on the CSU server, **NO COMMERCIAL EMAILS ARE ALLOWED. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SELL ANYTHING VIA THE LISTSERV – THANK YOU!** Use the newsletter ad section for these purposes.



*Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Boulder County Cooperating.
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Weather Outlook

The NOAA forecasts for the next 30 and 90 days are showing that the state will be above normal in temperature and the state slightly above normal in precipitation.

https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/predictions/long_range/seasonal.php?lead=1

If you have not checked out NOAA's website, they have a lot of good information beside their predictions. There are sections for children, their publications and preparing for various weather conditions. <https://www.weather.gov/>

The drought monitor for the state as of September 17, 2019 is showing that about half of the state is abnormally dry with the southwest part of the state in moderate drought. We only had a brief time where the whole state was no longer indicating any dry conditions. If you remember, the southwest part of the state was under exception drought conditions all last year.

<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?CO>



Coming events and workshops

Soil Revolution Conference

Save the date for the 4th Soil Revolution Conference. It will be held at the Jewish Community Center on Thursday, December 19, 2019, more details to follow or check out the website <https://soilrev.org/>

Healthy Grasslands Expo

Save the date for the Healthy Grasslands Expo on Thursday, February 2, 2020 at the downtown Denver Sheraton. This is a public session being held in conjunction with the Society for Range Management 2020 Annual Meeting. More details to follow.

National Western Stock Show

The Stock Show will take place January 11 – 26, 2020 in Denver. <https://nationalwestern.com/>

Colorado Farm Show

The Colorado Farm Show will take place January 28 – 30, 2020 at Island Grove Park in Greeley. <https://www.coloradofarmshow.com/>



Fall Small Acreage Tasks

Fall weed management

You know we are headed into fall when the weather forecast for the state includes snow at higher elevations. While the trees may not yet be turning, there is that hint of fall in the air. For certain weeds, fall is a good time to do some weed management.

Winter annual weeds will be germinating before too long. While it's a little late to put a pre-emergent down for cheatgrass (late July and August are better), you can be noting where you see it emerging for a possible winter herbicide application. The other winter annual weeds won't germinate for a while yet so there's not much you can do other than note their locations and numbers. You'll need to deal with them in the spring. Summer annual weeds are nearing the end of their growth for this year. Spraying them at this point is a waste of herbicide and money as they are already producing seeds. The only option you have at this point is to remove the plants and their seeds, so you aren't adding more seed to the soil for next year.

Biennials are forming or have formed their rosettes for next year. You can hand pull them, hoe, undercut or spray them. If you undercut the plant, be sure to pull the plant out of the ground. Just undercutting the plant will not kill it and it is likely to re-root. If they are small plants, the "organic" herbicides (containing acetic acid, citric acid or clove or cinnamon oils) will kill the plants. Larger plants may require a couple of applications. The appropriate (based on which weed it is) "synthetic" herbicide can also be used. Remove any flower stalks that still have flowers or seeds.

Perennials much like bears and other wildlife are storing energy for winter so they are more apt to take in an herbicide, so fall is a good time to spray them. If you can, remove any flower stalks and seeds so that you are not adding any more seeds to the soil or spreading them around

As always, you need to know the identity of the weeds you want to manage. Don't assume that the herbicide you purchased several years ago for your diffuse knapweeds will also work on your toadflax. Certain herbicides work better on certain weeds. To be the most effective and do the least harm to surrounding plants, you need to know what weeds you have and what management techniques and herbicides work best on them.

If your herbicides are several years old and have been exposed to alternating hot and cold temperatures out in your shed or barn, they may lose some of their effectiveness. They are chemicals and chemicals have expiration dates and break down over time and in extreme temperatures. If you notice that your weeds are not affected by an application, it may be that your herbicide has lost its' effectiveness. If you have herbicides that you are no longer using, you can take them to the Household Hazardous Waste Facility located at 1901 63rd Boulder behind the Recycling Facility.

<https://www.bouldercounty.org/environment/hazardous-waste/about-household-hazardous-waste/>

Always read and follow the label on the herbicides you use whether "organic" or "synthetic". They are both meant to kill plants and you want to be sure you kill your weeds and not your forage plants or injure yourself. The label provides information on any surfactant needed, personal protective equipment, timing of spraying, grazing or haying restrictions, location of spraying (i.e. up to water's edge) and lots of other important information.

Reseeding – You can start planning to re-seed this fall. Hopefully, you have been doing your weed management so that the weeds will not compete with your grass seedlings and cause a delay in establishment. You can purchase your seed and mow your cover crop in preparation for seeding. Don't do any re-seeding except for the November 1 to April 30th seeding window.

Water – If you are one of the fortunate ones and you still have irrigation water, keep irrigating as needed. Check the moisture in your soil and schedule your water.

Plans and priorities – Evaluate how you are doing on your plans. Living on a small acreage you will always be altering plans as conditions change. Start planning for those winter projects such as reseeded or setting up additional grazing cells.



Vesicular Stomatitis Update

Colorado Department of Agriculture,
BROOMFIELD, CO

The Colorado Department of Agriculture has confirmed cases of vesicular stomatitis (VSV) in 32 counties across the state: Adams, Alamosa, Arapahoe, Archuleta, Boulder, Broomfield, Chaffee, Conejos, Delta, Dolores, Douglas, El Paso, Fremont, Garfield, Gilpin, Grand, Gunnison, Jefferson, La Plata, Larimer, Mesa, Mineral, Montezuma, Montrose, Morgan, Ouray, Park, Pueblo, Rio Blanco, San Miguel, Summit and Weld.

The total count of premises under quarantine for VSV is 68 as of 9/16/2019 with 585 quarantines released. All cases were in equines except for 1 bovine each in Boulder and Delta Counties.

The first case of VSV in Colorado was reported on July 3rd in Weld County by a field veterinarian from the State Veterinarian's Office at the Colorado Department of Agriculture. An incursion of VSV-infected insect vectors is the likely source of infection. There are no USDA approved vaccines for VSV.

Vesicular Stomatitis Background

Vesicular stomatitis is a viral disease that primarily affects horses and cattle, and occasionally swine, sheep, goats, llamas, and alpacas. The transmission process of VSV is not completely understood, but includes insect vectors such as black flies, sand flies, and biting midges.

The incubation period ranges from 2-8 days. Clinical signs include vesicles, erosions, and sloughing of the skin on the muzzle, tongue, ears, teats, and coronary bands. Often excessive salivation is the first sign of disease, along with a reluctance to eat or drink. Lameness and weight loss may follow.

Humans may become infected when handling affected animals, but this is a rare event. To avoid human exposure, individuals should use personal protective measures when handling affected animals.

Tips for Livestock Owners

- Strict fly control is an important factor to inhibit the transmission of the disease.
- Avoid transferring feeding equipment, cleaning tools or health care equipment from other herds.
- **Colorado veterinarians and livestock owners should contact the state of destination when moving livestock interstate to ensure that all import requirements are met. Contact information for all state veterinarian offices is [listed here](#).**

- Colorado fairs, livestock exhibitions, and rodeos may institute new entry requirements based on the extent and severity of the current VS outbreak. Certificates of veterinary inspection (CVIs or health certificates) issued within 2-5 days prior to an event can be beneficial in reducing risks. Be sure to stay informed of any new livestock event requirements. See the [Vesicular Stomatitis Guidelines for Shows and Fairs](#).

Important Points for Veterinarians and Horse Owners

Any vesicular disease of livestock is reportable to the State Veterinarian’s Office in Colorado – to report call 303-869-9130. If after hours, the voice message will indicate which staff veterinarian on call.

Additional resources

[USDA APHIS Veterinary Services National VSV Update](#)

[CDA Vesicular Stomatitis Information](#)



The Benefits of Plant Diversity in Pastures

We have all seen the photographs of horses grazing on the bluegrass pastures of Kentucky. Quite often landowners here in Colorado expect their pastures to look similar and only be smooth brome or are concerned that plants

other than grass in their pasture are not good. While there are poisonous plants for livestock, many of the plants that grow in our pastures are not a problem for livestock and can provide some variety and nutrients for grazing livestock. Studies have shown that having more than one plant species in a pasture will improve pasture and soil health and provide livestock with some variety in their diets. If we look at our native prairie and rangelands, we see a diverse plant community.

Just as we don’t eat only peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for every meal, livestock enjoy variety in their grazing. Having a variety of forages available provides better nutrition. Different grasses and other plants have different levels of protein and other nutrients at different times of the year. So, having the variety will provide livestock with a more balanced diet. One example is adding legumes to a pasture increases the protein level and as they are nitrogen fixers they provide nitrogen to the grasses that are nitrogen users making a healthier pasture.

The native prairie/rangelands are based on several key species and then contain many other species based on the soils and microclimates. Boulder County is considered short grass prairie with buffalograss and blue grama as the main grass species. Other plants that are contained in a buffalograss/blue grama region are scurf pea, sideoats grama, sand dropseed, liatris, blanket flower, blue flax, fringed and prairie sage, prairie clover, green needlegrass, needle and thread, western wheatgrass, yucca, rabbitbrush just to name a few. While your livestock may not graze on all these species, they are given the option. Having a variety of grasses and forbs in an area has effects other than just providing additional nutrients and variety for your livestock. It also provides habitat for our native invertebrates like bees and butterflies. We must not also forget about the soil organisms. They like variety in their food supply just like other animals and there are certain soil organisms that live in relationship with certain plants. To have

healthy soil, you need a variety of plants growing in it. You also need to keep living plants in the soil. Bare areas (not those that are normal to our bunch grasses, but larger areas where vegetation has been removed by overgrazing or another method) have soil that is not as healthy as an area with many and different plants growing in it.

Having a variety of plants also is showing to help keep weeds from invading an area. A healthy stand of grasses and forbs will utilize all the water and nutrients that are available in the soil. With all the resources being utilized, there are none available for any weed seeds to germinate and grow. Even though many of our native grasses are bunch/clump type grasses, the space in between the clumps in the soil has roots from the grass clump that are utilizing the nutrients and water. This prevents any weeds from getting established.

So, if you have the monoculture of smooth brome what can you do about it? Putting out seed in a solid healthy smooth brome pasture is throwing your money down a drain. Smooth brome will outcompete any seed you put down and you will never see any benefit. Also, even though you may have planted a mix, over time smooth brome can and often does out complete your other grasses and forbs and creates a mono culture. There isn't a lot you can do about this other than practicing good grazing management so that you don't pre-maturely cause the other grass species to die out because they were overgrazed. For those areas that have been over grazed so that you have less than 30% soil covered with vegetation, you can reseed those areas with other grass and forb species. You won't be able to graze these areas for several years until your new species get established so be prepared to fence these areas off

You may already have some other species growing on your property. If you are managing weeds by using an herbicide, you could also be killing the other plants too. Consider spot

spraying only the areas with the weeds and not spraying the whole field or pasture.

Encouraging diversity in your pasture is beneficial to everyone and may add some color to your life and reduce your weed management tasks.

References:

"Effects of Plant diversity on invasion of weed species in experimental pasture communities", Benjamin F. Tracy, Ian J. Renne, Jim Gerrish, Matt A. Sanderson; Basic and Applied Ecology 5 (2004) 543-550

"Plant species diversity, ecosystem function, and pasture management – A perspective", M. A. Sanderson, S. C. Goslee, K. J. Soder, R. H. Skinner, B. F. Tracy, and A. Deak, presented at 2006 annual conference of the Canadian Society of Agronomy and the Canadian Society for Horticultural Science.

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Email Sharon Bokan for more details

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