



**Cornell University**  
Cooperative Extension  
Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team

## **CROP ALERT**

**April 5, 2014**

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### **Planning Burndown Herbicide Applications**

Each season we are seeing more and more acres of cover crops being planted. There is a lot more variety of species planted following our small grains crops than our traditional cereal rye behind silage corn. Those that winterkill, such as radishes and oats, are not a concern for us this spring but what about those that will wake up and compete with our crops. They have served their purpose of reducing erosion, improving soil tilth and capturing nutrients. How do we best control clover, annual ryegrass, wheat, cereal rye, vetch, and winter peas? The University of Missouri has a great summary showing spray treatments on all these cover crops "[Make Sure You Burndown Cover Crops Effectively](#)". Some of these species can be controlled with an early application of glyphosate but others are going to need an additional pint of 2,4-D for help. Timing is crucial for annual ryegrass and wheat as effectiveness will decrease as these plants get beyond the tillering stage. Crimson clover is also much harder to control with glyphosate and the trial showed much better efficacy with Gramoxone at the later spray date (Table 2). For additional discussion on this topic check out "[A Little Burndown Madness](#)" from Purdue University.

*Figure 1: Annual ryegrass cover crop in corn.*



*Source: [No-Till Farmer](#)*

### **Early Season Field Operations**

With rain in the forecast next week and the recent snow fall last weekend most folks will not be in the fields for awhile. Sandy soils will drain more quickly and be ready for field operations sooner than heavier clay ground. Before beginning field operations it's a good idea to dig up some of the soil and try to make a ball out of it. If the soil sticks together it's too soon to be out in the field. If it crumbles apart then the soil should be dry enough for field operations without causing compaction.

### **Early Small Grain & Haylage Scouting**

Early scouting reports from across the region indicate that winter small grain and haylage fields are just beginning to green up/break dormancy in some areas. Many small grain acres were planted later in 2013 than normal and a lot of fields are still looking pretty rough. In a couple of weeks we should have a better idea of how well these crops came through the winter. High temperatures will be approaching 50°F this week and should start waking up these crops.

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