

Don't Ignore Marestalk this Fall

By: Mike Hunter, CCE NCRAT

Marestalk (a.k.a Horseweed) is a weed that can be found in many crop fields, fallow areas, ditch banks and along roadsides in NNY. This is a weed that is becoming a problem for growers in Northern New York since there are now populations of glyphosate and ALS resistant marestalk in the north country. Multiple resistant marestalk is a weed that cannot be ignored and will continue to spread throughout the area.

Marestalk is a winter or summer annual weed that reproduces by seeds. Seeds can germinate in the spring, late summer or fall (see photo 1 and 2). Those seeds that germinate in late summer will overwinter as a small rosette of leaves and grow a flowering stem in the early spring. To successfully manage marestalk in no till cropping systems it is important to implement control tactics in both the fall and spring.

Multiple resistant marestalk can be a problem to control in corn, soybeans, and wheat. However, it will be most challenging to control in soybeans due to the limited number of effective herbicide options. It will be even a bigger problem in no till and reduced tillage soybeans.

Management options for multiple resistant marestalk in the fall include the use of cover crops and/or burndown herbicides.

- Planting a winter cereal cover crop such as rye has proven to be an effective strategy to suppress the growth of marestalk. It works best if the cover crops are seeded early enough so that it can provide the necessary biomass to suppress the emerging annual weeds.
- No till growers that are not using fall planted cover crops should consider applying a fall burndown herbicide to control emerged marestalk. Glyphosate alone will not control resistant marestalk. Glyphosate can still be used to control other weeds but will require the addition of 2,4-D ester or dicamba or Sharpen to control the marestalk.

Do not ignore any marestalk growing in your fields this fall. Let's be diligent and keep a lookout for potential herbicide populations of resistant marestalk in NNY. If you are finding higher populations of marestalk or are not getting adequate control of this weed please contact Mike Hunter (315)788-8450 or Kitty O'Neil (315)854-1218.



Photo 1. Marestalk in winter
wheat stubble August 14, 2020



Photo 2. Recently emerged
maretail in winter wheat stubble
August 14, 2020