

The Comparison of Herbicides for the Establishment of Warm Season Grasses

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Weed control is one of the biggest challenges in establishing native warm season grasses. Native warm season grasses are useful for wildlife cover and are being recommended for plantings for many USDA programs. Although Plateau is registered for use on warm season grasses in most states, its use on switchgrass and eastern gamagrass is not recommended due to phyto-toxicity. This study compares the effects of Plateau both pre and post emergence with Accent, Basis, 2,4-D, Banvel, Bicep Magnum Lite II (Pre) and mowing on the establishment of switchgrass, eastern gamagrass, big bluestem, indiangrass and little bluestem. The grasses were planted at the Big Flats PMC, Corning NY on 6/13/01 using a Tye drill in a conventionally prepared seed bed which was cultipacked both before and after seeding. The pre-emergence sprays were applied on 6/20/01 and the post emergence on 7/18/01. The predominant weeds were foxtail and nutsedge with some annual broadleaf weeds. A single mowing treatment provided little weed control due to the heavy annual grass pressure. The Plateau pre-emergence treatment had the best weed control and allowed for the adequate establishment of eastern gamagrass and more vigorous stands of the other warm season grasses except for switchgrass which did not emerge. The Plateau post emergence treatment killed the switchgrass and the eastern gamagrass but had good stands of the other grasses. Although the Accent and Basis herbicides (not labeled) reduced the vigor of most of the grasses it allowed for the sufficient establishment and growth of all species except for the indiangrass. The 2,4-D seemed safer on all species than Banvel although both could be used for broadleaf control. The Bicep Lite II Magnum at the 1.5 qt/ac rate adversely effected all species except eastern gamagrass.