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# SERICEA LESPEDAZA

*A Noxious Weed In Kansas*

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## HABITAT AND LIFE HISTORY

Sericea lespedeza is a drought hardy legume, introduced, as a forage crop in the Southeastern United States.

In Kansas, sericea lespedeza was planted in the 1900's and again in the 1930's for erosion control, wildlife habitat and as a forage crop. In 2000 the Kansas legislature declared sericea lespedeza a noxious weed.

Sericea lespedeza is found primarily in native rangeland, waste areas, CRP and roadsides in Kansas.



## VEGETATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Sericea lespedeza is a perennial with erect stems up to 5 ft. tall and small hairs laying flat along the ridges on the stem. The leaves, with 3 leaflets, are less than 1 inch to 1 1/2 inches long and 1/4 to 1/2 inch wide with the larger leaflets on the lower portion of the stem. The leaves are flattened on the outer end with small flat hairs on the lower surface. Flowering occurs from mid or late July to October and may be tinged with purple but always dry to yellow.

The tannin content of sericea lespedeza increases during the growing season making it unpalatable to livestock during mid to late season grazing.



## REPRODUCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Sericea lespedeza reproduces primarily by seed. Seeds move with water, infested hay, birds, livestock and wildlife. The hard seed passes through the digestive tract of animals.



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## METHODS OF CONTROL

### Management Options

Inspect all pastures and rangeland in July, August and September. Early detection of the presence of sericea lespedeza is essential to economical control.

### Cultural Control

Prescribed burning in late spring followed by intensive, early stocking may reduce the occurrence.

Grazing infested areas with sheep and goats will provide effective control.

Mowing in the late bud stage for 2 to 3 consecutive years from mid-July to late summer should reduce the vigor of the stand.

### Herbicide Recommendations

Metsulfuron methyl  
(Escort XP, Ally, Cimarron)

Triclopyr  
(Remedy, Garlon)

Triclopyr & Fluroxypyr  
(PastureGard)

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## FACTORS FOR BEST CONTROL

Apply herbicides when the plants are actively growing and not stressed by drought.

For ground application apply herbicides in 10-20 gallons of water per acre.

Use of a polymer type deposition aid may enhance control. Consult the product label for directions.

Calibration of application equipment is essential.

## PREVENTION OF SPREAD

Do not move hay that may contain viable seed from infested areas.

Feed noxious weed free hay and forage.

Check the labels of grass seed and grass seed mixtures for the presence of sericea lespedeza prior to purchase.

Do not move mature cattle in late summer through October from an infested pasture to a clean pasture.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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