

PRESS RELEASE FROM MICRON SPRAYERS

Hit ragwort early with the Weedstick

In just four months time ragwort will start to cover the countryside with swathes of golden yellow flowers but by this time it could already be too late for effective and lasting control.

Cutting down tall flowering stems during summer results in the normally biennial ragwort adopting a perennial lifestyle, allowing plants to survive winter and start all over again in spring.

Attempts to dig out plants makes matters worse by generating a new plant for every fragment of the long and stubborn tap root left in the ground.

Only an early spring hit with herbicide on the vegetative leaf rosette stage will ensure the landscape stays free from ragwort's yellow flowers in summer.

Spot-on and measured shots of herbicide applied when spring re-growth is set to start, but while plants are still sluggish and susceptible after low light and temperature conditions in winter, is required.

Operators should make sure they familiarise themselves with ragwort at this rosette stage because the plants look considerably different to those in the summer flowering condition. As a rule leaves are not as finely divided as those on the stems of flowering ragwort plants and vegetative leaf rosette stage ragwort plants can be easily picked out, especially where grass is shortened due to high rabbit numbers, because rabbits graze around and avoid poisonous ragwort plants.

The Weedstick from Micron Sprayers is the weapon of choice in March and April when ragwort is still in the vegetative state. This light-weight applicator is easy to carry and use and allows operators to place herbicide exactly and precisely where needed, which is spot-on the flat ground-hugging rosettes of leaves.

The WeedStick is simply placed over the ragwort weed to be treated and pressed down to deliver the required dose of herbicide which is once for small plants and a second time for larger plants. There is no risk of drift which means the WeedStick can offer obvious advantages of precise spot application over knapsack sprayers, especially useful in sensitive areas like wet meadows and grass verges with valued wild flowers, on flower beds in parks and anywhere near water.

Ragwort does not normally invade professional turf but has been found on golf courses along-side railways, with many railway embankments heavily infested with ragwort and the heavy seed load (150,000 seeds per plant per season) quick to exploit any gaps in sports turf like divots on tees and fairways.

For best results use the Weedstick when the ground is moist and while ragwort is still a rosette of ground hugging leaves. Highly targeted spot application with minimal use of water provides good economic control with the Weedstick.

Further information and details from:

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