Weed focus: Goldenrod

Sharon Freeman, Ramon Leon, Deidre Harmon, and Matt Poore

Goldenrod varieties (Solidago species) are found worldwide and are used in traditional medicine to promote health, although many consider these plants to be weeds. Species native to the U.S. are warm-season perennials. Plants contain saponins, which can have antifungal effects, and flavonoids, which can act as anti-oxidants and anti-inflammatory agents.





Golden rod is perhaps best known for its flowers (photos below). They appear late in the summer and into the fall. Individual flowers are daisy-like. They are tiny and grouped on complex flower heads. Different species are difficult to identify because all have bright, yellow flowers. Seed dispersal is by wind, but the plants can also spread by rhizomes, underground. They can be highly attractive to pollinators, producing copious nectar if there is adequate moisture. Goldenrod can be a showy addition to flowerbeds but may not be welcome in pastures.









<u>Controlling goldenrod in pastures</u>: Goldenrod has a difficult time becoming established in a well-managed pasture since seeds may not make contact with the soil. If a pasture becomes over-grazed, however, goldenrod can take root in bare spots. Since it is not particularly palatable to livestock, they generally do not eat this plant, giving it an opportunity to spread and form large colonies. Repeated mowing to prevent the plant from flowering can reduce the population over time. Herbicides can also be used. Dicamba products, amimopyralid (Forefront [®], Grazon Next [®], Milestone [®]), 2, 4-D, triclopyr and clopyralid (Redeem[®], Prescott[®]), and mixtures of these herbicides can reduce the populations as well; however, their application will also impact beneficial plants in the pasture. Glyphosate will also kill goldenrod and it might be an option for spot treatment or when pasture renovation is needed.

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