

Prevent Weed Spread from Donated Hay



Hay donated to wildfire areas can contain noxious and invasive weed species, insect pests, and plant diseases from other locations in Montana and from states where it was grown. Use the following resources to identify unknown plants, insects and disease and prevent their spread.



Best Management Practices

- Use donated hay in an area that can be easily monitored for new weed species.
- Document where new weed species are located, then follow-up with weed control and monitoring; monitor for several years.
- Treat weeds before they produce seed.
- Remove and dispose of weed seed that become established.
- Defer moving livestock through an

area with a new weed species until it is removed or contained.

- Ask where the hay was grown/donated from, if possible.
 - View distribution maps of weeds in Montana and the West to get an idea of potential weed threats from donated hay. <https://www.eddmaps.org/west/distribution/>
- Use certified weed free forage, if available.
- Collect unknown plants for identification (collect the entire plant and roots). For help with identification, take the plant to your county weed district, Natural Resources Conservation Service office, Extension agent, Montana Range Partnership, or submit a sample to Montana State University Schutter Diagnostic Lab for identification. This is a free service for Montana residents. Find contact information, submission instructions, fee information, and forms online at www.diagnostics.montana.edu.
 - Insect pests and plant diseases can also be sent to the Schutter Diagnostic Lab for identification.
 - Identify Montana Noxious Weeds. See this guide to Montana Noxious Weeds as a reference. <http://msuextension.org/publications/AgandNaturalResources/EB0159.pdf>



Black henbane, a poisonous plant, has been found in donated hay.

Left photo by Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org.

For More Information

Natural Resources Conservation Service field office in your county.
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/mt/contact/>

County Weed District
<http://mtweed.org/find-weed-coordinator/>

County Extension Agent
<http://msuextension.org/localoffices.cfm>

Montana State University Schutter Diagnostic Lab
<http://diagnostics.montana.edu/>

Hay Hotline, Montana Department of Agriculture
 406-444-3144, agr@mt.gov or <http://agr.mt.gov/Hay-Hotline>

Montana Weed Seed Free Forage
 406-444-7819 or <http://agr.mt.gov/Noxious-Weed-Seed-Free-Forage>

Montana Rangeland Partnership
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Baby's breath, musk thistle, and field scabious are county-listed weeds in western Montana that could spread in hay and persist in eastern Montana.



Baby's breath photo by Julia Scher, USDA APHIS ITP, Bugwood.org.

Musk thistle photo by Wendy VanDyk Evans, Bugwood.org.

Field scabious photo by Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org.

Weeds currently found in eastern Montana may also spread. Watch for leafy spurge, knapweeds, and toadflax.



Leafy spurge photo by Montana NRCS.

Medusahead, rush skeletonweed, and blueweed are only found in a few western Montana counties. However, hay has been donated from these counties to eastern Montana. Know your weed identification!



Medusahead photo by Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org.



Rush skeletonweed photo by Joseph M. DiTomaso, University of California - Davis, Bugwood.org.



Blueweed photo by Rob Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org.



Spotted knapweed photo by Rob Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org.



Dalmatian toadflax photo by Utah State University, Bugwood.org.



Sulfur cinquefoil photo by USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org.



Hoary alyssum photo by John M. Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org.

Watch for sulfur cinquefoil, hoary alyssum, perennial pepperweed, and St. Johnswort moving with hay from western Montana.



Perennial pepperweed photo by Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org.



St. Johnswort photo by Becca MacDonald, Sault College, Bugwood.org.



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