



# NuisanceNews

A quarterly publication from the Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement Department

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## Noxious Notes:

Get an early start on Goat Head (Puncturevine) control this year. Spray Chlorsulfuron (Telar) as a pre-emergent to non-crop areas in March or April.



## Winter Time Projects At WPM

The winter months at Ada County Weed, Pest and Mosquito Abatement are busier than most people would think. It's valuable time spent wrapping up one season and preparing for the next. Data from the previous season is gathered and processed as new strategies are planned for the upcoming season. Equipment is cleaned and detailed, spray trucks are recalibrated, old equipment is discarded and new equipment is ordered. Technologies, practices, and procedures are constantly being changed and updated so our year around staff attends trainings and meetings to stay current on all the new and improved application methods and equipment.



Proper vehicle maintenance is essential to the optimum functionality of all our spray trucks. All our trucks are thoroughly cleaned and serviced in preparation for a long and hot summer. Spray trucks are carefully calibrated to make sure herbicides are applied at the recommended ratios for the safest and most effective results.

*This new truck purchased in January is being transformed into a weed spraying truck.*

In our mosquito department, crews work to build new stands and repair old stands for our mosquito surveillance traps. Maruyama's, which are the backpack sprayers we use to spread larviciding product, are thoroughly cleaned and calibrated so that the proper amount of chemical and bio-agents will be dispersed at the correct rates.



*New geocache in Barber Park*

In our administration department, staff is working to update and settle past expense accounts while making sure our finances are in order for the upcoming season. Our education department works to find new ways to inform and update the public on what we do and how we can improve their quality of life. Look for us this year at home shows, parades, fairs, and other public events.



*Forklift training in December*

Ultimately the goal for our winter months, which is essentially December through February, is preparing for the upcoming season which starts in early spring. Our vehicles, equipment, finances, training, and staff all need to be in working order so we can hit the ground running once temperatures begin to warm up. Everything from the previous season is processed and plans are put into place that will continue to keep WPM on the main stream of nuisance control services.

# NWFF&S Certification Program

The purpose of the ISDA Noxious Weed-Free Forage and Straw (NWFF&S) Certification Program is to limit the introduction and spread of noxious weeds through forage and straw onto United States Forest Service (USFS) and other Idaho lands. In addition, the weed-free certification program allows for the transportation and sale of certified Idaho forage and straw products into and through states and other boundaries where restrictions are placed on such commodities. These products meet the USFS Weed-Free Hay Order requirements: State Certified Noxious Weed-Free Hay, Cubes, and Straw. Pelletized feed is not required to be certified, because the pelletizing process (heat) destroys seed viability. ISDA recommends pre-feeding your animals State Certified Noxious Weed-Free Forage (hay or cubes) or pellets 48 hours prior to entering USFS lands. It is also suggested to thoroughly brush and clean hooves to remove potential seeds from your animals before leaving home.



*Source: Idaho State Department of Agriculture*

Ada County Weed Control has state certified inspectors who will inspect your forage or straw field before your crop is harvested to determine whether the crop will be eligible for certification.

## Have You Seen This Noxious Weed?



*Saltcedar*

### Saltcedar

Saltcedar plants are spreading shrubs or small trees, 5 to 20 feet tall, with numerous slender branches and small, alternate, scale-like leaves. Pale pink to white flowers form dense masses at the top of the branches.

Like many other invasive plants, Saltcedar has a great reproductive capability. A mature saltcedar plant can produce 600,000 seeds annually and has the ability to flower during its first year. Seeds are easily dispersed by wind and water, and severed stems and shoots of saltcedar readily root in moist soil. The plant's ability to exploit suitable germinating conditions over a long time period gives saltcedar a considerable advantage over native riparian species.

Saltcedar deposits salt above and below the ground, forming a saline crust inhibiting other plants from growing in its vicinity.

A very rapid grower, saltcedar can grow 9 to 12 feet in a single season under good conditions.

Saltcedar has a long taproot with lateral roots that grow on streambanks, lake margins, wetlands, moist rangelands, and saline environments.

# FDA could set millions of genetically modified mosquitoes loose in Florida

KEY WEST, Fla. — Millions of genetically modified mosquitoes could be released in the Florida Keys if British researchers win approval to use the bugs against two extremely painful viral diseases.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is considering releasing the non-biting male *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes modified by Oxitec to pass along a birth defect to their progeny, thus killing off the next generation of the mosquitoes that can carry dengue and chikungunya. The FDA is planning to release the mosquitos in a neighborhood of 444 homes near Key West, Fla.

Never before have insects with modified DNA come so close to being set loose in a residential U.S. neighborhood.

“This is essentially using a mosquito as a drug to cure disease,” said Michael Doyle, executive director of the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, which is waiting to hear if the Food and Drug Administration will allow the experiment.

Dengue and chikungunya are growing threats in the U.S., but some people are more frightened at the thought of being bitten by a genetically modified organism. More than 130,000 signed a Change.org petition against the experiment.

Even potential boosters say those responsible must do more to show that benefits outweigh the risks.



*A genetically modified male Aedes aegypti mosquito*

“I think the science is fine, they definitely can kill mosquitoes, but the GMO issue still sticks as something of a thorny issue for the general public,” said Phil Lounibos, who studies mosquito control at the Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory. “It’s not even so much about the science — you can’t go ahead with something like this if public opinion is negative.”

Mosquito controllers say they’re running out of options that can kill *Aedes aegypti*, a tiger-striped invader whose biting females spread these viruses. Climate change and globalization are spreading tropical diseases farther from the equator, and Key West, the southernmost city in the continental U.S., is particularly vulnerable.

“An arriving person would be infectious for several days, and could infect many of the local mosquitoes,” Doyle said. “Within a few weeks you’d likely end up with several infected mosquitoes for each infected visitor.”

There are no vaccines or cures for dengue, known as “break-bone fever,” or chikungunya, which causes painful contortions. U.S. cases remain rare for now, but dengue sickens 50 million people annually worldwide and kills 2.5 percent of the half-million who get severe cases, according to the World Health Organization. Chikungunya has already overwhelmed hospitals and harmed economies across the Caribbean after infecting a million people in the region last year.

# Tentative Start Dates For Upcoming Weed, Pest and Mosquito Season Set

It may not seem like it now, but spring is right around the corner. These are the approximate dates our weed, pest and mosquito crews will begin their seasons. Dates are tentative and dependent on the weather. When dealing with any nuisance control issues it's important to attack the problem early. Work request orders can be made over the phone or on-line and the sooner you place your orders, the higher the success rate in controlling that problem.

- 2/2 Start taking weed control work orders.
- 2/9 Start taking pest control work orders.
- 2/17 Recommendations for weed control begins.
- 2/23 Weed pasture applications begin.
- 3/2 Pest control services begin.
- 4/18 Larvicide and adulticide work order requests taken.
- 4/18 Mosquito larviciding services begin.
- 5/25 Night time mosquito fogging (adulticiding) to begin.



*Gopher removal services will begin 3-2-15*

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