United States Department of Agriculture

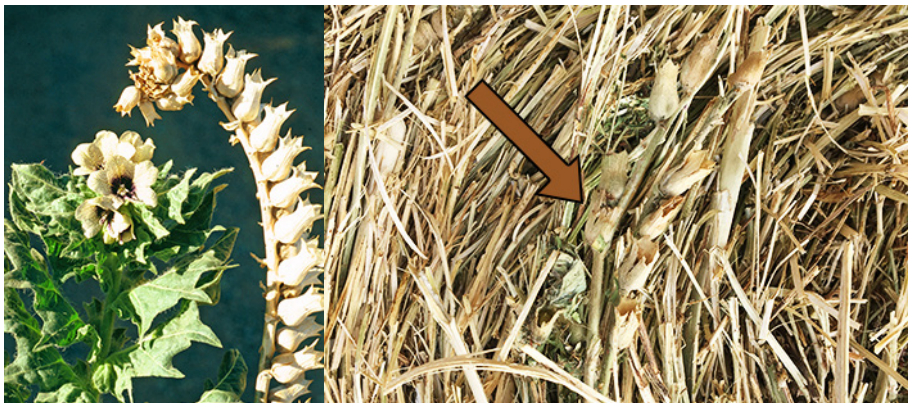
# Prevent Weed Spread from Hay

## PREVENT WEED SPREAD FROM HAY

Donated hay or hay brought from out-of-state locations to drought and wildfire-stricken areas can contain noxious and invasive weed species, insect pests, and plant diseases from areas where it was grown. If you purchase hay from out-of-state or your local area or had wildfire damage, be alert to any new or unfamiliar plants growing in livestock feeding grounds and burned areas. Follow these best management practices and use available resources to identify unknown plants, insects and disease in order to prevent their spread.

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Ask where the hay was grown or donated from, if possible.
  - View distribution of weeds in Montana and the West to get an idea of potential weed threats from donated or out-of-state hay: https://www.eddmaps.org
- Use certified weed seed free forage, if available.
- Feed 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 montioring; monitor for new weeds for several years.
- Control weeds before they produce seed.
- If weeds have produced seed, remove plants and seeds and dispose of them in the trash.
- Delay moving livestock through an area with a new weed species until it is removed or contained.
- Collect unknown plants, pests and plant diseases for identification (collect the entire plant including roots). For help with identification, take the plant to your county weed district, NRCS office, Extension agent, or submit a sample to Montana State University Schutter Diagnostic Lab for identification. Find contact information, submission instructions, and forms at www.diagnostics.montana.edu.
- Identify Montana Noxious Weeds: http://msuextension.org/publications/AgandNaturalResources/EB0159.pdf



Black henbane, a poisonous plant, has been found in donated or out-of-state hay

*black henbane photo by S. Dewey, USU, bugwood.org.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service field offices https://www.farmers.gov/contact

County Weed Districts https://www.mtweed.org/

Local Extension Offices https://msuextension.org/localoffices.html

Montana State University Schutter Diagnostic Lab www.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 www.montanarangelandspartnership.org

Yellow starthistle and Palmer amaranth are problem weeds in states that have shipped hay to Montana. These species could spread and persist in rangeland and cropland.

*yellow starthistle*
*photo by C. Roche, bugwood.org*

*Palmer amaranth*
*photo by R. Recker, University of Wisconsin-Madison, bugwood.org*

Medusahead, rush skeletonweed, and blueweed are only found in a few western Montana counties. They have the potential to spread to eastern Montana in hay. Know your weed identification!

*medusahead*
*photo by S. Dewey, bugwood.org*

*rush skeletonweed*
*photo by J. DiTomaso, bugwood.org*

*blueweed*
*photo by R. Routledge, bugwood.org*

Watch for sulfur cinquefoil, hoary alyssum, and ventenata in hay from western Montana.

*ventenata photo by M. Lavin, MSU, flickr*

*sulfur cinquefoil*
*photo by USDA ARS*

*hoary alyssum*
*photo by J. Randall, bugwood.org*

Montana
Natural Resources Conservation Service
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