

Know Your Nebraska Noxious Weeds

SERICEA LESPEDEZA *Lespedeza cuneata* (Dum. Cours.) G. Don

Over generations both the rate of introduction and spread of noxious weeds have increased significantly. This change is mainly due to an increase in human travel, expanding commerce through trade, and a lack of knowledge of how weeds are spread. By becoming educated about noxious weeds, you're doing your part to help stop their spread and protect the environment.

What is the threat?

If noxious weeds are left uncontrolled, the Nebraska that we enjoy today will look much different for future generations. Do your part, become educated and help stop the spread of noxious weeds.

How did sericea lespedeza get here?

[Sericea lespedeza](#) is native to Asia. It was first introduced into the United States in 1896, and the oldest listing of it on Nebraska record is 1974 in Richardson County. Sericea lespedeza was declared a noxious weed in Nebraska in 2013.



What does sericea lespedeza look like?

Sericea lespedeza grows 3 to 6 feet in height. Leaves are alternate and are composed of numerous 3-leaflet clusters. The white or cream flowers are composed of 1 to 3 pea-like flowers and appear from July to September.

What is the impact of doing nothing?

Sericea lespedeza out-competes native grasses thus reducing the carrying capacity of livestock because it is not palatable to most livestock. In a mixture with grass, it usually becomes the dominant species after three to four years. Established sericea lespedeza plants will reduce or eliminate competing vegetation and restrict the amount of light reaching other plants. A scientific Weed Risk Assessment indicated a very high risk to invade 98% of land in Nebraska.

Is sericea lespedeza good for anything?

Sericea lespedeza forage quality is low. Foliage is eaten by deer, rabbit, and wild turkeys. Seeds are eaten by quail and other birds.

How does sericea lespedeza spread?

Sericea lespedeza is a long-lived perennial forb spreading by its rhizome roots. It also produces an abundant amount of seed that may be spread by wildlife and livestock.

How can I control sericea lespedeza?

Controlling small infestations is more effective and less expensive.

Options for [sericea lespedeza](#) control include:

Mechanical - Mowing and burning will prevent seed production but will not control the plant.

Herbicide - Several herbicides are effective in controlling sericea lespedeza. Using herbicides following a prescribed fire once regrowth has occurred is effective.

Biological - Because sericea lespedeza is still grown as a crop in southern States, no biocontrol has been approved by USDA at this time.

What is a Noxious Weed?

A noxious weed is a nonnative plant, which is known to be invasive and can be directly poisonous to man, livestock, and wildlife. Noxious weeds compete with crops, rangeland and pastures reducing yields substantially.

It is the duty of each person who owns or controls land in Nebraska to effectively control noxious weeds on his/her property. For more information about Nebraska's Noxious Weeds contact your local [Weed Control Superintendent](#)