Weed Management in Alfalfa:

Uncontrolled weeds in seedling alfalfa can cause loss of the stand during crop establishment. Weed infestations can weaken young alfalfa plants, retard growth, and delay the first cutting. Proper establishment and management of an alfalfa stand are essential for weed control. **It is not cost-effective to control weeds in a thin or weak stand.** Alfalfa that germinates and grows rapidly in response to warm temperatures, adequate soil moisture, and shallow planting will develop into a competitive and relatively weed-free stand. Adequate soil fertility, especially phosphorus, is also essential in establishing and maintaining a vigorous stand. Plant alfalfa varieties that are well adapted and grow vigorously in your climate and soil.

With the cooler temperatures of fall and optimum planting times for alfalfa approaching, winter weeds will soon be germinating in established alfalfa fields. It is human nature to think that winter weeds germinate later in the year because that is when they are large and visible along roads and in fields. In reality, they germinate earlier than we often realize. Now is a good time to be thinking about **preemergence herbicide options** for established alfalfa fields. Some winter weeds such as common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*) are toxic while others impart off-flavors to milk when fed to dairy cows. **[Click here](#) to read more about preemergence herbicide in alfalfa.**

- Read more about the topics of weeds biology in alfalfa, weed control during stand establishment, in established alfalfa stands control of summer annuals and perennials in established alfalfa and Roundup ready alfalfa system in the [Weed Management in Alfalfa](#) Chapter of the UC [Irrigated Alfalfa Management of the Mediterranean and Desert Zones](#).

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News from USDA:

**USDA Launches Program to Support Agricultural Employers and Farmworkers, Aiming to Increase Economic and Supply Chain Resilience**

USDA has announced agricultural employers can begin to apply for a pilot program designed to improve the resiliency of the food and agricultural supply chain by addressing workforce challenges farmers and ranchers face. USDA, in coordination with other federal agencies, is announcing up to $65 million in grants available for the Farm Labor Stabilization and Protection Pilot Program.

The program will help address workforce needs in agriculture, promote a safe and healthy work environment for farmworkers, and aims to support expansion of lawful migration pathways for workers, including for workers from Northern Central America, through the Department of Labor’s seasonal H-2A visa program. **[Read more](#) about the pilot program.**

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COTTON ADVISORY

- Crop maturity or stage of development over the fruiting cycle can be estimated by counting the number of nodes above the top (first position) white flower to the plant terminal (NAWF, refer to UA guidelines). For example, at first bloom it is best to find 9-11 NAWF, 8-9 at early bloom, and 6-8 at peak bloom. When the average NAWF measurements hit 5 or less, it is a strong indication that the crop is moving into the last part of first fruiting cycle. Cut-out results in a hiatus in flowering at the end of the primary fruiting cycle, followed by a resurgence in vegetative growth and later fruit development. With the increased humidity, heat, and/or rains that many areas are expecting, it will be important to watch out for excessive vegetative growth and/or a possible drop in fruit retention.

- **Boll Maturity Dates for Late Season Flowers:** Approximately 600 Heat Units (HUs) are required after flowering for a boll to reach physiological maturity (hard green boll). An additional 400 HUs are required for the boll to open. [CLICK HERE for UArizona Cooperative Extension publication on Boll Maturity Dates for Late Season Cotton Flowers](#). The table in the second page of this article provides expected boll maturity and opening dates for selected late season flower dates based on normal HU accumulation.

- Making the decision for the last irrigation of the season is an important step in the production of a cotton crop. Identifying the last set of blooms and bolls to mature for harvest is the critical part of that process. Irrigations are needed to maintain good soil moisture from a bloom to full-sized green boll stage for full fiber development. The presence of a tan seedcoat is a good indication of sufficient boll maturity. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about **Irrigation termination of Cotton**.

- Defoliation is the next and final step of the crop season in preparation of the crop for harvest. A general rule of thumb is to evaluate a field for defoliant application at ~ 2X the normal in-season irrigation interval. The plants need to be stressed and senescing but still alive and physiologically active. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about **Defoliation Timing for Arizona Cotton**.
Prescott-AZ Pesticide Applicator Pre-Certification Training

The University of Arizona, Yavapai County Cooperative Extension and the Pesticide Safety Education Program will present a **FREE Pesticide Applicator Pre-Certification Training** for people preparing for either the Arizona Agricultural or Structural Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Exams. The 1½ day course will be held in Prescott, Arizona on **October 19th and 20th**. Additional information is available on the link of the 2-page flyer below. Attendance is limited to 30 people and the pre-registration deadline is Friday, October 13, 2023. If you are interested in attending, please complete the pre-registration form on page 2 of the attached flyer and send it to Sierra Sheeks, ssheeks@arizona.edu at the Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Office.

**AZ Pesticide Applicator Pre-Certification Training Info**

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Optional Exams Event for Arizona Agricultural Pesticide Applicator Certifications

As an added bonus, The Arizona Department of Agriculture’s Ag Consultation and Training Program will hold an **optional** (October 20, 2023) Arizona Agricultural Pesticide Applicator Certification Exams Event for people who would like to use Restricted Use Pesticides (RUPs) in agricultural production areas. This event is also limited to 30 participants. If you are interested in participating, please complete the separate “Prescott Exams Event” registration form, linked below, and send it to Roberto Rios, rrrios@azda.gov. If you have questions about the exams event and/or the various exam categories listed on the form, please contact Roberto Rios by phone (602) 542-0985.

**AZ Pesticide Applicator Agricultural Certification Exams Event**
The 13th Annual Central Arizona Farmer Field Day

R.S.V.P. to Ayman Mostafa at ayman@arizona.edu

When: Wednesday, November 15, 2023 / 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
Where: Maricopa Ag Center, 37860 W Smith Enke Rd, Maricopa, AZ 85138
Who should attend: Growers, PCAs, Ag industry representatives and anyone interested in field crops in Arizona
Topics: Agronomic and pest management aspects of field crops.
        Tour of the research farm to show results from current research conducted by UArizona Cooperative Extension Ag team.
Speakers: UArizona Cooperative Extension Ag team and industry representatives

Agenda coming soon / Lunch will be provided

Save the Dates:
Pest Management and Pesticide Safety Seminars 2023 for Turf and Landscape Maintenance

The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Turfgrass Program will present the Annual Pest Management and Pesticide Safety Seminars 2023 for Golf and Landscape Maintenance personnel.

The seminars will be offered on two dates and locations in person:

- Tues, Nov. 28th at Ocotillo Golf Club Pavilion, 3751 S. Clubhouse Drive, Chandler AZ 85248
- Wed, Nov. 29th at Lecture Hall, Recreation Centers of Sun City West, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd, Sun City West, AZ 85375

Both events will feature the same content, with presentations by experts on various aspects of turf and landscape pest management and pesticide safety. Six AZ Dept. of Ag. ESD (Ag.), PMD (OPM) and GCSAA CEUs will be applied for. Register at https://tinyurl.com/yeyj7mx7.

For more information, please contact Shaku Nair at nairs@arizona.edu.