

Waterhemp



Overview

Waterhemp (*Amaranthus tuberculatus*) is a summer annual broadleaf weed that is a member of the pigweed family. Originally from south central United States, waterhemp has been spreading north and west in agricultural fields. Waterhemp is an aggressive weed and has now become one of the most troublesome weeds in North America as it has developed resistance to most commonly used herbicide groups.

Waterhemp is resistant to several herbicide groups, and 5 way resistance to **groups 9, 2, 5, 14 and 27** develops rapidly. There are NO new chemistries for waterhemp control so we must use the products we have efficiently, effectively and sustainably so they will last.

Waterhemp Identification



Leaves

Hairless, lanceolate (long and narrow), glossy



Stems

Smooth, hairless, green to reddish



Flowers

Small, green, arranged in terminal spikes



Height

Can exceed 2 meters

Photo credit: Ontario government

[Ontario.ca/document/weed-identification-guide-ontario-crops/waterhemp#section-1](https://ontario.ca/document/weed-identification-guide-ontario-crops/waterhemp#section-1)

Note: There are several pigweed species in Manitoba that look very similar at the seedling stage. See Identification Comparison of Pigweed Species.

[Manitoba.ca/agriculture/crops/weeds/pubs/pigweed-identification.pdf](https://manitoba.ca/agriculture/crops/weeds/pubs/pigweed-identification.pdf)

If you Identify or Suspect Waterhemp in your Field

- *Must* remove before it sets seed.
- Pull or dig up plants to get all the roots.
- Do not cut plants as they will regrow and set seed.
- Do not put through the combine as this will only spread the seed.

Waterhemp plants are prolific seed producers and one plant alone can produce **up to one million seeds!**

Integrated Management Practices

Cultural Practices	Mechanical Control	Chemical Control	Sanitation and Prevention
Grow diverse crop rotations with competitive crops in the mix.	Strategic tillage can eliminate waterhemp plants	Use a rotation of PRE- and POST-emergence herbicides with multiple effective modes of action.	Thoroughly clean equipment between fields to prevent seed spread.
Utilize cover crops where possible to suppress waterhemp emergence through competition.	Hand weeding is effective in small infestations; remove plants before seed set.	Post-harvest herbicide control with products containing 2,4-D, MCPA, dicamba or other fall weed control products.	Ensure that manure and compost are free from waterhemp seeds before application.
Use narrow row spacing for quicker canopy closure.	Fall tillage for control of late emerging weeds.		

Contact Us

This factsheet was developed by the Manitoba Agriculture Weed Specialist.

For more information, contact the department:

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Waterhemp can germinate **post-harvest** and produce seed before freeze up.