Controlling Wild Garlic and Wild Onion
Michigan State University Extension Service
IPM Facts
Fred Salzman, Karen Renner, Jim Kells, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences
Revised January 1998
2 pages

IPM FACTS
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension Bulletin E-2255 Revised January 1998

Controlling Wild Garlic and Wild Onion

Fred Salzman, Karen Renner, and Jim Kells
Department of Crop and Soil Sciences
Michigan State University

What is a Perennial Weed?

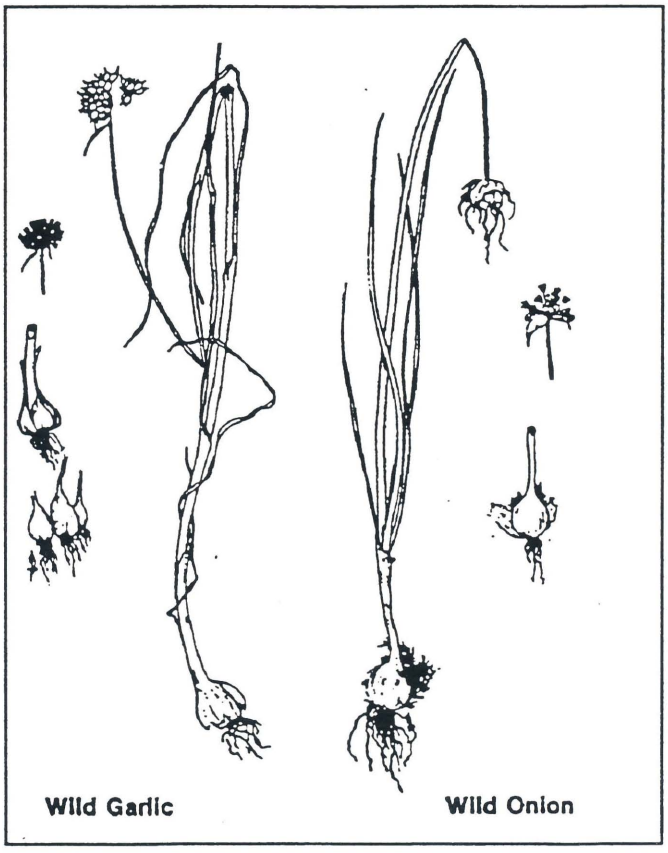
A perennial weed is any weed capable of surviving for three or more years Perennial weeds are characterized by vegetative reproduction. Vegetative reproduction in these species is due to (a) rhizomes–underground creeping stems commonly found in perennial grasses; (b) stolons–prostrate stems or runners on the soil surface with roots at the nodes; (c) creeping roots; (d) tubers–underground enlarged storage stems; or (e) bulbs–underground storage organs consisting of a stem axis covered with many overlapping leaf scales.

Perennial weeds may or may not reproduce by seed. They always, however, have the potential to reproduce by vegetative means.

Description of Wild Garlic and Wild Onion

Wild garlic and wild onion are two related species that grow from bulbs. Plants can reach a height of 1 to 3 feet. Wild garlic leaves are round, hollow, and attached to the lower half of the stem. Wild onion leaves are flat, not hollow, and are attached only to the base of the plant. Wild garlic reproduces by underground and aerial bulblets. Wild onion reproduces only by aerial bulblets; no underground bulblets are produced.

Wild garlic and wild onion are found in grain fields and pastures.



Methods of Control

Methods of perennial weed control fall into three categories: (a) cultural, such as crop rotation; (b) mechanical, tillage including various implements such as plows, disks, or cultivators; and (c) chemical, using herbicides. Control of perennial weeds may require a combination of all these methods. Consider the energy and environmental implications when choosing a method of control.

Mechanical Control

Mechanical control may increase or decrease perennial weed infestations. Tillage may increase infestations by moving perennial weeds to new areas of the field or breaking dormancy of underground buds resulting in new shoot growth. Tillage during cool, wet conditions results in reduced control.

Tillage may decrease perennial weed infestations if done frequently enough to deplete underground root reserves. The field should be tilled every two or three weeks. Warm, dry soil conditions increase the effectiveness of tillage for perennial weed control by drying plant roots on the soil surface.

Chemical Control of Wild Garlic and Wild Onion

Winter Wheat and Barley

Herbicide[1]	Rate	Timing (Weed height)	Effectiveness
Harmony Extra + NIS[2]	0.6 oz/A + 1/4%	POST (less than 12", 2-4" new)	Good
Banvel + 2,4-D ester	0.25 pt/A + 1 pt/A	POST (less than 12", 2-4" new, crop fully tillered)	Fair

[1]Harmony Extra is somewhat less effective on wild onion. Use these treatments only in fall-seeded wheat and barley.
[2]NIS = nonionic surfactant.

This bulletin was prepared with the support of the U.S. Department of Energy, Grant No. DE-FG276CS60204. However, any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of DOE.

To protect yourself and others and the environment, always read the label before applying any pesticide.

This publication contains pesticide recommendations based on research and pesticide regulations. However, changes in pesticide regulations occur constantly. Some pesticides mentioned may no longer be available, and some uses may no longer be legal. If you have questions about the legality and/or registration status for using pesticides, contact your county Extension office.

MAJOR REV, DESTROY PREVIOUS, 1/98-150-KMF/UP. Price 25¢, single copy free to Michigan residents