STINGING NETTLE

(Urtica dioica)

Stinging nettle, sometimes called slender nettle or tall nettle, is a perennial reproducing by seeds and underground rootstocks. It originated in Europe and is now widespread in southern Canada and the North Central states of this country. Sometimes it may be found in the eastern United States.

It grows in damp, rich soil along roadsides, neglected yards, municipal parks, and near streams. Stinging nettle may cause welts and inflammation if touched by the skin. Bristly hairs (1) on the stems and leaves cause irritation.

Stems (5) are slightly branched near the top and may reach a height of 7 feet. The stems are round, slender, and rigid.

Leaves (4), 3 to 6 inches long, are dark green and opposite each other on the stem. They are ½ to 3 inches wide and have deeply serrated (saw-toothed) margins toward the tip. Leaves are sometimes rounded at the base.

Greenish flowers (6), without petals, are produced in clusters in the leaf axil, where leaves join the stem. Male (staminate) and female (pistillate) flowers are borne separately on the same plant. Only one yellow to grayish-tan seed (2) is produced by each female flower. Seeds are egg shaped, slightly rough, and about 1/32 inch (1 mm.) long.

Branched roots penetrate several feet deep. New plants are borne from joints of shallow rootstocks (3) which grow laterally from the crown.

Plants with similar common names in the genus *Solanum* are horse nettle *(S. carolinense),* and white horse nettle *(S. elaeagnifolium);* they have thorns on the leaves and stems, too. However, these species do not cause irritation like stinging nettle.

Control of stinging nettle by 2,4-D is good. Use 2/3 pound of a low volatile ester or 1 pound of 2,4-D amine per acre. Spot treatments are successful, but repeated applications may be necessary to kill all plants in patches of this weed. Follow directions on the herbicide label closely.

Prepared in cooperation with Crops Research Division, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Beltsville, Maryland

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Herban Gets USDA Label Clearance

Herban, a selective herbicide produced by Hercules Inc., has just received label clearance from the U. S. Department of Agriculture for preemergence weed control in commercial culture of many standard nursery plants.

The clearance is for Herban's use on ornamental shrubs, trees and perennial flowers such as Ajuga, Shasta daisy, chrysanthemums, Stonecrop, Creeping Thyme, periwinkle, English ivy, day lily, Japanese Andromeda, Japanese holly, *Osmanthus delavayi,* juniper, arborvitae, Euonymus, Burfordi holly, Ligustrum, *Magnolia,* Nandina, Pyracantha, *Camellia japonica, Camellia sasangua,* and *Spiraea.* Spray application to foliage is not recommended for less tolerant species such as pine seedlings, Noxwood, *Hibiscus,* and rhododendron. Any plants not listed on the Herban label cannot be safely planted in areas treated with the chemical until five months later.

Weeds controlled by Herban in commercial nurseries include annual weeds and grasses such as barnyardgrass, goosegrass, brachiaria, annual chickweed, Coloradograss (Harrahgrass), cocklebur, crabgrass, Florida pusley, foxtail, henbit, lambsquarters, morningglory, panicum (summer and fall), pigweed, and purslane. Deep-germinating morningglory and cocklebur control requires good rainfall to move the herbicide to plant roots. Herban does not control perennial weeds such as trumpetvine, nutgrass, and johnsongrass.

A wettable powder, Herban can be either broadcast or applied as a band over the row. It can also be used on newly planted liners as soon as the soil settles. Recommended rates are 4 to 6 pounds per acre (broadcast). Rain or sprinkler irrigation is needed for proper root absorption.

For more information about availability of Herban write to Hercules Inc., Hercules Tower, Wilmington, Del. 19899.