



Weed of The Week

Common Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*.)

If you are looking for healthy food this new year's you might be interested in trying this week's weed of the week! Common Purslane is a low-growing weed that was thought to come from North Africa and reached North America in the late 16th century in contaminated landscaping plant seeds. This weed has been known to have medicinal properties and is very high in vitamins A, and C, Calcium, iron, magnesium, and antioxidants. Some studies have shown when Common Purslane fodder is fed to chickens, egg cholesterol levels will be lower. With all these health factors, you might be wondering why it is called a weed. Common Purslane is a fast-growing summer annual that can crowd out your desirable landscaping plants due to its low-growing prostrate growth habit. This plant prefers well-drained soils and can survive hot and dry climates. Common purslane can form a mat that reaches as far as 3 ft from the growing point and 16 inches in height. Key identifiers include oval-shaped succulent leaves that are broadest toward the tip of the leaf, and leaves that attach directly to the stem. Flowering begins in late spring and summer but year-round flowers have been recorded. Flowers of this plant are ¼-1/2 inches in size, yellow in color, and self-pollinating. Once pollination is complete the flower will wither away but the seed pod will remain filled with many small black seeds. Applying thick layers of mulch and hand pulling before seed production are two very good ways to control common purslane in flower gardens and landscapes. Spot applications of glyphosate, 2-4-D or Dicamba can be good post-emergent herbicides but remember to always read and follow the label.

