

Weed of The Week

Creeping Buttercup

Do not let this weed and its beautiful flower fool you this spring. Creeping Buttercup can create problems for cattle producers this coming spring. Creeping Buttercup is a low growing rosette forming perennial weed. Creeping Buttercup can reproduce by seed and stolons. Stolons are above ground modified stems that can reproduce new generations of plants at each node. This plant grows very well in wet poorly drained soils, overgrazed pastures, lawns, and disturbed crop fields. Creeping Buttercup will reach heights of 2 feet but can grow in large patches with its horizontal growth habit. This weed will produce a showy yellow flower that brightens up the landscape in mid to late May. One of the main concerns with this weed is its ability to produce a toxic oil called protoanemonin. This oil is bitter, irritating, and toxic to livestock, especially cattle. When livestock consume the leaves of this plant, the oil can irritate the lining of the mouth and digestive tract. If cattle consume enough of the plant tissue symptoms can be paralysis, convulsions, and even death. Some ways to control this weed in pastures is first and foremost good pasture management, address fertility and do not overgraze pastures. Herbicide control can be effective but there is no silver bullet. 2-4-D, Dicamba, weed master, pasture guard, and Cimarron have all been shown effective. The best time of application is early spring before flowering and when air temperatures reach 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

