



## Weed of The Week

### Field Sandbur (*Cenchrus spinifex*)

This week's weed of the week is one of my favorites, it is always that weed that gets your attention when you grab a square bale from a field with this weed growing in it! Sandbur is considered a summer annual grass that has on occasion been able to persist through mild winters and can spread by tillers and seed production. Young seedling often emerge mid spring and flowering will take place throughout the summer. Small seedling leaf blades have fine hair at the base of the leaf sheath and seedlings are usually purple in color. Sandbur seedlings are often confused with foxtail and barnyard grass, the mature plant can be confused with yellow nutsedge. Sandbur has a very shallow fibrous root system that can grow in a variety of soil types but prefers lighter soils such as sandy loam. Sandbur seeds are encapsulated in spiny bur type fruit that drops to the ground or is dispersed by wildlife, livestock, and machinery. Seeds from this plant can actually germinate in cooler soils, research has shown that seeds can germinate at soil temps as low as 39°F. Seed germination can be stimulated by scarification or scratching of the seed coat. If tillage is used to control sandbur incorporating seeds deeper than 4 inches is critical to reduce germination. Germination of seeds are actually lower when seeds are left on the soil surface. Managing sandbur in pastures can be a challenge but good grazing management and strong forage stands can prevent problems. Spot applications can be made with glyphosate in a pasture or hay situation, in new seeding or establishment years, a preemergent application of prowl H2O can be used to prevent new seedling flushes, as always read, and follow the herbicide label.

