



Weed of The Week

Kudzu (*Pueraria Montana var.*)

Often referred to as the plant that ate the south, Kudzu is this week's weed of the week. With its fast growth and giant appetite for climbing other vegetation, eventually choking out anything that gets in its patch, it is no wonder it has made one of the nation's top invasive weed lists. Even though Kudzu is known to be a major problem in southern states, it continues to keep north and can be found in 15 out of 88 counties of Ohio. Kudzu is in the legume family and can be found growing along woodlands, roadsides, fallow fields, fencerows, and waist areas. Kudzu is an herbaceous semi-woody perennial that usually dies back in the wintertime, but as our winters become warmer it can actually survive winter quite well. This climbing plant will sprawl out as much as 98 ft in one growing season! The leaves of this plant make it very noticeable due to its large broad lobed leaf, some leaves can be non-lobed, but all are in a trifoliate pattern. Flowers of this plant are clusters of pink pea-like flowers, and some say that flowers smell like grapes. Flowering usually begins in mid-summer and continues into early fall. Seeds are formed in a pod that is very similar to soybeans but much larger. Kudzu can be a big challenge to control due to its large tuberous root system that stores a lot of energy. Kudzu control should involve both mechanical and chemical combinations. Cutting the plant down and then applying brush-type herbicides such as triclopyr or crossbow directly to the stem. Continuous mowing is also an effective method to reduce plant growth and spreading.

