



## Weed of The Week

### Velvet Grass (*Holcus lanatus* L.)

This week's weed of the week features a soft eye-catching grass that can become quite the issue in our pastures and hayfields. Common Velvet Grass is a perennial bunch forming grass that propagates from seed. Velvet Grass grows well in moist soils or poorly drained pastures and hay fields. Common Velvet Grass can be identified by its silver to grayish color producing a fluffy soft textured seed head that has a purple tent. The plant blades and stems are covered with small fine textured hair. Flowering and seed production will take place from mid-May to Late July. This grass can easily spread throughout pasture and crowd out desired forage species. One main concern of velvet grass is the potential to be toxic to livestock after frosts damage or drought stress. Common Velvet Grass has Cyanogenetic Properties like other species such as wild cherry and sorghum Sudan grass, producing glucosides that can be deadly if consumed by livestock after a frost or drought stress events. The best means of controlling Common Velvet grass in pastures is good grazing management and maintaining good stands of forage. Artificial drainage can also be a good method of controlling this plant due to its suitability to poorly drained soils. Herbicides are very limited in pastures settings but for row crops, herbicides such as Glyphosate work well. Close mowing before the plant goes to seed has seen successful results in controlling this weed in a pasture or hay setting.

