

Weed of The Week

Velvetleaf (*Abutilon theophrasti*)

Velvetleaf is an annual weed that can be a problem for both soybean and corn production. This weed competes aggressively for nutrients, which makes it harmful to those growing agronomic crops. Velvetleaf is named due to the dense soft hairs covering the leaf on this plant. The leaves are very large, and heart shaped making them easy to distinguish. As the plant matures it produces a cup shaped yellow flower that has 5 petals. Another identifying factor of velvetleaf is the unique seed capsule it produces. The seed capsules are dark gray in appearance and contain between 35 to 45 seeds. These seeds can survive in the soil for decades, so it is best to prevent seed set when dealing with velvetleaf. This weed reaches heights of 5 to 7 feet at maturity, making it easy to stand out in a soybean field. Leaves and stem have an unpleasant odor when crushed.

Non-chemical forms of control for velvetleaf include delaying planting or rotating to a summer crop to help eliminate seedlings through tillage. Tine weeding or rotary hoeing can be effective when utilized as velvetleaf seedlings are just emerging. Delayed planting also allows application of a preemergence such as 2-4-D to burndown before planting. Other preemergence that work well against velvetleaf include: Clomazone, Latir, Panther Pro, and Zidua Pro. Postemergence chemical control include Cadet, Classic, First Rate, Marvel, Pursuit, and Thifensulfuron. Be sure to follow the label when applying any herbicides.

