

TOXIC WEED ALERT: CREEPING INDIGO

Creeping indigo is a non-native plant that is typically found in “high-traffic” areas of pastures, roadsides, lawns, and grass parking areas. The plant contains the toxins 3-nitropropionic acid and indospicine that can potentially affect all livestock, but the most clinical cases have been documented in horses. Indospicine is the toxin

responsible for causing corneal edema, ulcerations, and non-neurologic symptoms, while 3-nitropropionic acid interferes with mitochondrial energy production and produces lesions within the basal ganglia of the brain leading to neuronal degeneration and motor dysfunction.



Creeping indigo is a prostrate plant with a very shallow or submerged crown. The perennial root is a taproot capable of growing at least 2 feet deep. Stems grow to 6 feet long and root at the nodes. Tiny appressed hairs can be observed on leaflets, stems, and seedpods.



Pink flowers are borne at the leaf axils and are in spike-like racemes. Lateral petals are longer than lower ones.



Leaves are alternate and contain 5 to 7 alternate leaflets. Scattered appressed hairs are often found on the leaflets.



Seed pods are clustered, hairy, and pointed downward. A needle-like point is commonly found at the tip of the seedpod. Each seedpod contains 4 to 8 hard seeds that can remain dormant in the soil for many years.

Herbicides effective for creeping indigo control in pastures.

Herbicide ²	Broadcast rate (oz/acre)	Spot-treatment rate (oz/gallon water)	Control ¹
GrazonNext HL ⁴	24	0.5 to 1.0	E
Dicamba	32	0.5 to 1.0	G - E
Remedy Ultra	16 - 32	0.5 to 1.0	G
2,4-D Amine	64	1.0 to 2.0	G
Pasturegard HL	16 - 24	0.5 to 1.0	G - E
Metsulfuron ³	0.3	0.01	E

¹E = 90 to 100% control, G = 80 to 90% control.

²Be sure to read and follow the herbicide label.

³Metsulfuron should not be applied to bahiagrass pastures as severe forage injury will occur.

⁴Manure from animals grazing pastures treated with this herbicide should not be composted, but can be spread back onto the treated pasture.

To learn more about creeping indigo view publication number SS-AGR-395 found here <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag399> or contact your local UF/IFAS Extension county office <http://solutionsforyourlife.com/>.