

A University of Nebraska–Lincoln specialist recommends treating perennial weeds in early fall to take advantage of winter weather.

“One reason for spraying weeds around September 1 is that the herbicide weakens them and the winter can finish them off,” said Bob Klein, western Nebraska crops specialist in North Platte.

When crop producers spray in spring, the weeds have ideal growing conditions to recover, he said.

Weeds that are growing actively in early fall, take nutrients down to the roots. They also carry the herbicide to the root. In fact, to do a really good job of eliminating perennial weeds, producers should make sure the weeds are actively growing and are not under moisture stress.

Producers might want to delay treatment if fall weather gets dry and the weeds are not growing. Although it’s not likely in 2009, sometimes fall is so dry that producers can’t successfully treat, Klein said. In that case, it’s probably better to make a spring application. Hopefully, the following fall will provide better growing conditions.

Always be sure to apply the correct herbicides for the weeds you have, Klein advised. To help select herbicides, check the 2009 Nebraska Guide for Weed Management available online at <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/eublic/live/ec130/build/ec130.pdf>