



TIPS FOR USING ROUNDUP® HERBICIDE

By Tim Wood
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- Roundup® is the name given by the company. Its active ingredient is glyphosate. It also contains surfactants, which help the herbicide to penetrate plant leaf surfaces. They make the product sudsy in water.
- Roundup enters plants through leaves and other above-ground plant parts. It has no activity in the soil. So it can't kill weed seeds or new shoots that have not emerged.
- Roundup is systemic, meaning it gets translocated from the leaves into the plant and down into the roots.
- Roundup is nonselective, meaning it affects all plants it comes in contact with, not just grasses, for example.
- Roundup works best when plants are not under stress, such as drought, unusually high, or low, temps.
- It is less effective when sprayed after weeds have been mowed.
- Roundup gets tied up by, and broken down in, the soil. It is even affected by mixing it in dirty water or spraying it on plants that are very dusty.
- When using hard water, only mix up what you'll use in the next day or so. Minerals in the water can decrease Roundup's activity over time.

When is the best time to apply Roundup?

It depends on whether you're treating annual or perennial weeds.



Quackgrass with its underground stems called rhizomes.

Perennial weeds

- Are more difficult to kill than annual weeds that emerge each year from seeds. It may take 7 or more days to see symptoms that Roundup is working—yellowing plants that eventually turn brown. Whereas, annuals may show these signs after only 2-4 days.
- Broadleaves like Can. thistles are more difficult for it to kill than grasses.
- For the best results, Roundup must be translocated from the leaves to the entire root system of perennials. So wait **at least** a day before tilling the soil.
- Best weed stages for this occurs when the weeds are also moving food in the same direction. This happens at flowering and also in the fall as perennials are preparing to survive the winter.
- But you can also spray Roundup in the spring as long as there are enough leaves to absorb the product. Quackgrass, for example, should be about 6 in. tall and temps should be warm and sunny for optimum growth, in the 60s or higher.

Annual weeds

- Because they emerge from seeds, rather than from an extensive root system like perennials, annuals are usually easier to control. But this is not a slam dunk!
- For best results, treat small weeds. Don't wait until they become monsters!
- Even annuals can be difficult to control if they are under severe stress, such as drought.
- Remember that Roundup has no soil activity. So you may treat a flush of weeds, watch them die, but in a few weeks, find a second batch has emerged in its place.