

# South Dakota Statewide Noxious Weeds

## Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)



**Roots:** Numerous pink buds, deep, reddish-brown, spreading, large nutrient reserves.

**Stems:** Erect, smooth, branched at the top, normally 1-2 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Alternate, narrow, length 1 to 4 inches

**Seed:** Born in exploding capsules that can expel seed to 15 feet, longevity 5 to 8 years.

**Flowers:** yellowish-green to yellowish-orange surrounded by yellow-green bracts.

**Origin:** Eurasia, thought to have entered the USA as a crop seed contaminant.

**Poisoning:** Milky latex sap throughout the plant may cause dermatitis on human skin. Toxic to cattle, sheep and goats do not seem to be affected.

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## Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvensis*)



**Roots:** Spreading, pieces capable of producing plants, extensive.

**Stems:** Erect, hollow, branched above, ridged.

**Leaves:** Dark green, wavy and very spiny

**Seed:** The tuft of hairs attached to the top of the seed allows the seed to be carried by wind, small, long lived.

**Flowers:** Small, up to 3/4 inch diameter, pink to purple, occasionally white, male and female flowers on different plants.

**Origin:** Eurasia and North Africa, brought into Canada as a crop seed contaminant.

**Poisoning:** May accumulate high nitrate levels.

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## Perennial Sow Thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*)



**Roots:** Extensive, may penetrate soil five to ten feet deep, new plants produced by small root pieces.

**Stems:** Milky sap throughout the plant, erect, 2-5 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Deeply lobed to nearly entire, clasping base, mildly prickly margins but lack spines on the lower midrib.

**Seed:** Tufted, spread by wind.

**Flowers:** Yellow, up to 2 inches wide with flower stalks and flower base (bracts) covered with gland tipped hairs.

**Origin:** Eurasia or Europe

**Poisoning:** Unknown

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### Hoary Cress (*Cardaria draba*)



**Roots:** Extensive, creeping, branched above.

**Stems:** Up to 2 feet tall, erect, stout.

**Leaves:** Oblong, alternate, margins wavy and shallowly toothed.

**Seed:** Rough, reddish-brown, in heart shaped bladder-like capsules, abundant.

**Flowers:** White, 4 petals, margins toothed to entire.

**Origin:** Eurasia

**Poisoning:** Mucous membrane irritant.

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### Russian Knapweed (*Centaurea repens*)



**Roots:** Extensive, widely spreading, black, may penetrate over 8 feet.

**Stems:** Erect, openly branched.

**Leaves:** Alternate, clasping, lower leaves deeply lobed, upper leaves entire or serrated.

**Seed:** Small, oval.

**Flowers:** Numerous, disc shaped, pink to purplish, bracts below the flower have pointed papery sheaths.

**Origin:** Eurasia

**Poisoning:** None

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### Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)



**Roots:** Short rhizomes, tap root

**Stems:** Erect, 6-8 feet tall

**Leaves:** Simple, not lobed, opposite or whorled, smooth margins.

**Seed:** Small, oval

**Flowers:** Six petals (may be 5 to 7), rose-purple color.

**Origin:** Eurasia and Africa

**Poisoning:** None

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**Salt Cedar (*Tamarix aphylla*, *T. chinensis*, *T. gallica*, *T. parviflora* and *T. ramosissima*)**



**Roots:** Woody tap root may penetrate over 50 feet.

**Stems:** Erect, tree or shrub 2-25 feet tall.

**Leaves:** Small flat leaves appear scaly or cedar-like.

**Seed:** Very small, no endosperm with a tuft of fine hair.

**Flowers:** Five white to pink petals borne in finger-like clusters.

**Origin:** Eurasia

**Poisoning:** None