When 4-H’ers become members of a team, they learn how to work with one another and to respect the differences of each individual. In addition, as they learn to identify plant and seed samples, they gain an appreciation for the importance of attention to detail and improve their decision-making skills.

**Objectives**

Local 4-H Crops and Weeds Contests help 4-H members develop their skills in plant and seed identification. This activity can be a vital part of the 4-H Crops Project.

The State 4-H Crops and Weeds Contest is held annually during the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. It consists of identification of both plants and seeds of common crops and weeds.

**Resources**

Plant and seed samples of most field crops and weeds are available at a nominal cost from the Department of Agronomy, Throckmorton Hall, Kansas State University Manhattan, KS 66506, 785-532-6101. Agents and leaders who are assisting 4-H members prepare for the contest may be able to use samples from high school agricultural education programs. Area agronomists also may provide more information and assistance in training a team. This publication includes a list of identification tips for the plant and seed specimens required for the contest.

Excellent resources for teaching identification of weeds are available on the internet and in publications. Some suggested web sites are:

1. USDA Plants Database, [http://plants.usda.gov/java](http://plants.usda.gov/java)
4. Weed Identification, Kansas State University, [http://www.agronomy.ksu.edu/extension/doc2115.ashx](http://www.agronomy.ksu.edu/extension/doc2115.ashx)

Some suggested publications are:

4. Interactive Encyclopedia of North American Weeds DVD,

**General Rules**

1. No communication is permitted among contestants or anyone else, except officials, during the contest. No cell phone use is allowed during the competition. Contestants will be paced to move from one station to the next by a contest official every 30 seconds. Only one contestant will be allowed at each station at a time. Failure to follow directions and rules will be grounds for disqualification.

2. Contestants may bring a small hand lens (with or without battery powered light) to use in both plant and seed identification.

3. A team will consist of four members from one county who are currently enrolled members of 4-H, with the top three scores used for the team score. An individual may compete for individual awards if fewer than three persons are available to form a team from a county.

4. A county may have a maximum of two competing teams, one in the junior division (age 13 and younger) and one in senior division (age 14 and older).

5. Legible writing is important, and judges will consider this factor when scoring papers.

6. Special awards are presented to the top three individuals and members of the top three teams.

**Special Rules**

**Part 1. Plant Identification**

1. This part of the contest consists of 50 pressed plant samples mounted on cardstock. Participants earn 1 point for correct identification of each specimen, for a total of 50 points.

2. An answer form with multiple choice answers will be provided, and answers will be recorded by correct letter.

3. In the case of a tie, three tie-breaker plant specimens will be identified without the aid of multiple choice.

4. The time limit for each sample is 30 seconds.

5. Samples will be taken from the provided list of crops and weeds requiring plant identification.

**Part 2. Seed Identification**

1. This part of the contest consists of 50 seed samples.
Participants earn 1 point for correct identification of each seed sample, for a total of 50 points.
2. An answer form with multiple choice answers will be provided, and answers will be recorded by correct letter.
3. In the case of a tie, three tie-breaker seed samples will be identified without the aid of multiple choice.
4. The time limit for each sample is 30 seconds.
5. Samples will be taken from the provided list of crops and weeds requiring seed identification.

Specimens for Identification
The following are specimens to be used in either the plant or seed portion of the contest, unless specifically listed as plant or seed only.

Field Crops (FC)
1. alfalfa
2. barley
3. bermudagrass (plant only)
4. big bluestem (plant only)
5. buffalograss (plant only)
6. canola
7. cotton
8. durum wheat (seed only)
9. eastern gamagrass
10. grain sorghum
11. hard red winter wheat (seed only)
12. hard white wheat (seed only)
13. Indiangrass (plant only)
14. Korean lespedeza
15. little bluestem (plant only)
16. oat
17. pearl millet
18. pinto fieldbean (seed only)
19. popcorn (seed only)
20. proso millet
21. red clover
22. rye
23. smooth bromegrass
24. soft red winter wheat (seed only)
25. soybean
26. sudangrass (seed only)
27. sugarbeet (seed only)
28. sumac sorgo
29. sunflower (seed only)
30. sweetclover
31. switchgrass (plant only)
32. tall fescue
33. triticale
34. white dent corn (seed only)
35. yellow dent corn (seed only)

Noxious Weeds (NW)
1. bull thistle (plant only)
2. bur ragweed (plant only)
3. Canada thistle
4. field bindthistle
5. hoary cress
6. johnsongrass
7. leafy spurge (plant only)
8. musk thistle (plant only)
9. quackgrass
10. Russian knapweed (plant only)
11. sericea lespedeza (plant only)

Common Weeds (CW)
12. barnyardgrass
13. buffalograss (plant only)
14. cheat
15. common cocklebur
16. common dandelion (plant only)
17. common lambsquarters
18. common milkweed (plant only)
19. common ragweed
20. common waterhemp (plant only)
21. curly dock
22. devil’s claw (plant only)
23. dodder
24. downy brome
25. eastern black nightshade
26. fall panicum (plant only)
27. field pennycress
28. giant ragweed
29. green foxtail
30. hedge bindweed (plant only)
31. hemp (marijuana) (plant only)
32. hemp dogbane (plant only)
33. henbit (plant only)
34. honeyvine milkweed (plant only)
35. horsetail (plant only)
36. jimsonweed
37. jointed goatgrass
38. kochia
39. large crabgrass
40. longspine sandbur (plant only)
41. morningglory
42. Palmer amaranth (plant only)
43. Pennsylvania smartweed
44. prickly lettuce (plant only)
45. prickly sida
46. prostrate knotweed (plant only)
47. prostrate spurge (plant only)
48. puncturevine
49. redroot pigweed
50. Russian thistle
51. shattercane
52. smooth groundcherry (plant only)
53. tansy mustard (plant only)
54. treacle mustard (plant only)
55. velvetleaf
56. Venice mallow
57. western salsify (plant only)
58. wild buckwheat
59. wild onion (plant only)
60. wild sunflower
61. yellow foxtail
62. yellow nutsedge (plant only)

SAMPLE ANSWER FORMS

OFFICIAL FORM - 4-H Plant Identification

Contestant Name or Number _______________________________   Score__________________

Write the correct choice on the corresponding line.

__ 1.  (A) wild sunflower   (B) common cocklebur   (C) velvetleaf   (D) Venice mallow

__ 2.  (A) little bluestem   (B) big bluestem   (C) Indian grass   (D) switchgrass

__ 49.  (A) green foxtail   (B) yellow foxtail   (C) large crabgrass   (D) barnyardgrass

__ 50.  (A) alfalfa   (B) red clover   (C) sweetclover   (D) Korean lespedeza

Tie-Breaker 1. __________________________________________________________________

Tie-Breaker 2. __________________________________________________________________

Tie-Breaker 3. __________________________________________________________________

OFFICIAL FORM - 4-H Seed Identification

Contestant Name or Number_______________________________   Score__________________

Write the correct choice on the corresponding line.

__ 1.  (A) pinto fieldbean   (B) soybean   (C) proso millet   (D) popcorn

__ 2.  (A) smooth bromegrass   (B) tall fescue   (C) yellow foxtail   (D) barnyardgrass

__ 49.  (A) green foxtail   (B) yellow foxtail   (C) large crabgrass   (D) barnyardgrass

__ 50.  (A) barley   (B) rye   (C) triticale   (D) oat

Tie-Breaker 1. __________________________________________________________________

Tie-Breaker 2. __________________________________________________________________

Tie-Breaker 3. __________________________________________________________________
Field Crops (FC)

1. **alfalfa**
   - **Plant**
     - Trifoliolate, pinnately compound leaves (all three leaflets do not attach at same point like clovers)
     - Serrations on top third of leaflets
     - Yellow, white, or purple, raceme inflorescence
     - Curled pods are black when ripe
   - **Seed**
     - Greenish-yellow to brown color
     - Most seeds kidney-shaped, but many irregular and variable with some more mitt shaped

2. **barley**
   - **Plant**
     - Seeds neatly aligned in six rows on the spike
     - Stiff, straight awns
   - **Seed**
     - Hulls with creases and ridges, ragged at the tip
     - Pointed at the tips and fat in the middle

3. **bermudagrass (plant only)**
   - Perennial with creeping stolons
   - Digitate inflorescence with four to six spikes
   - Spikelets on one side of rachis and densely packed

4. **big bluestem (plant only)**
   - Tall, upright stems
   - Purplish color on stems and leaves
   - Usually three racemes emerge from one spot on each stalk; like a “turkey foot”

5. **buffalograss (plant only)**
   - Wiry, prostrate stolons spread from the crown
   - Narrow, curly, pubescent leaves
   - Males have one-sided spike-like racemes on taller stalks
   - Female flowers in the axils of leaves on very short stalks near base of crown

6. **canola**
   - **Plant**
     - Smooth, large-lobed leaves with bluish cast
     - Clasping petioles on leaves surrounding stem
     - Bright yellow flowers in racemes
   - **Seed**
     - Small, round seed reddish-brown to black color
     - Most seeds have a longitudinal depression creating “cheeks” on one side

7. **cotton**
   - **Plant**
     - Huge solitary flowers; produces boll that opens to expose fibers at maturity;

8. **durum wheat (seed only)**
   - Amber color with glassy appearance
   - Pointed germ and no brush; humped back and indented on “belly” side

9. **eastern gamagrass**
   - **Plant**
     - Thick-stemmed grass with rigid leaf blades finely serrated on the edges
     - Inflorescence is a cluster of one to three spikes like big bluestem
     - Each spike has male flowers on top and females below; males look like a corn tassel
   - **Seed**
     - Thick, cylindrical jointed spike sections break apart at maturity
     - Shorter and fatter than jointed goatgrass

10. **grain sorghum**
    - **Plant**
      - Compact panicle on long, fat peduncle
      - Broad grass leaves with no hairs
    - **Seed**
      - Very rounded; threshed free of glumes
      - May be any color (red, orange, white, yellow, pink)

11. **hard red winter wheat (seed only)**
    - Oval shape, dark brown color (may have some yellow berry if not of top quality);
    - Rounded cheeks and shallow, tight crease

12. **hard white wheat (seed only)**
    - Oval shape, creamy white color
    - Rounded cheeks and shallow, tight crease
    - May have some more chalky kernels if not of top quality

13. **Indiangrass (plant only)**
    - Tall uprights stems similar to big bluestem
    - Clawlike ligule on leaf
    - Long, dense, golden brown panicle inflorescence with numerous, hairy awns

14. **Korean lespedeza**
    - **Plant**
      - Glabrous, palmately trifoliolate leaves
      - Broad, heart-shaped leaflets
      - Large, papery stipules with no chlorophyll (tan or brown)
      - Distinct leaflet venation (fish bone appearance)
5

Seed
- Flat, oval shape; shiny black in color
- Often covered with a thick, veined, brown/gray pod; one seed per pod

15. little bluestem (plant only)
- Slightly curved, slender inflorescences branch from upper stem nodes
- One raceme per peduncle
- Hairs on pedicel attaching sterile spikelets more prominent and fuzzy than on big bluestem

16. oat
Plant
- Open, branched panicle (tree-like) inflorescence
- Spikelets covered with large, papery, distinctly veined glumes
Seed
- Seed covered with straw colored hulls
- Smoother than barley; more uniform in width from top to base compared to barley

17. pearl millet
Plant
- Long, dense spike; looks like a possum tail or cattail plant when mature
- Dense with off-white to gray seeds when mature
- Immature spike has a feathery appearance
Seed
- Dull, gray color
- Teardrop shaped; may be slightly shriveled
- More pointed germ end than white grain sorghum seeds or other millets

18. pinto fieldbean (seed only)
- Tan color, marbled with brown speckles
- Medium to large, oblong kidney shape

19. popcorn (seed only)
- Very hard texture
- Rounded or pointed on top, with no dent

20. proso millet
Plant
- Large open panicle
- Three papery glumes with distinct veins
Seed
- Glossy, shiny lemmas cover the seed
- White, yellow, orange, red, green, or gray
- Larger than foxtail millet; elliptical shape

21. red clover
Plant
- Pubescent (hairy) stems and petioles
- Pubescent, palmately trifoliolate leaves
- White variegation on leaflets
- Large stipule with prominent, purple veins
- Rounded head generally with no peduncle, thus sits directly on top of leaf and stipule
Seed
- Yellow to purple color, usually bicolored with dark base fading to light at top
- Mitt-shaped; thumb a fourth as long as mitt
- Slightly angled crease between the thumb and mitt

22. rye
Plant
- Neatly organized spike with narrow, pointed glumes
- Sawtooth edge on lemmas
Seed
- Light to dark brown to grayish color
- Pointed germ end and no brush compared to wheat

23. smooth bromegrass
Plant
- Open, erect panicle inflorescence
- Large, papery glumes overlapping like shingles
- Several florets per spikelet with no awns
Seed
- Brown to straw colored
- Large and flat with distinct veins on the lemma
- Ragged, blunt tip

24. soft red winter wheat (seed only)
- Uniform yellow-brown in color (yellowberry)
- Rounded cheeks with deep, open crease

25. soybean
Plant
- Trifoliolate leaves covered with hairs
- Very small flowers; short very fuzzy pod with three seeds
- Leaves and stems very hairy; no stipules
Seed
- Yellow ball with shallow, patch-like hilum

26. sudangrass (seed only)
- Covered with hard, shiny glumes; may be various colors
- Pedicels do not have knobs like johnsongrass
- Thinner than shattercane, thicker than johnsongrass

27. sugarbeet (seed only)
- Dark tan to brown with very irregular shape
- Seeds enclosed in rough, hard, cork-like capsule
- May be multi-germ or mono-germ (mono-germ a third as large)

28. sumac sorgo
Plant
- Sorghum relative
- Compact, dense panicle with maroon color
Seed
- Round seed threshes free like grain sorghum, but only half the size
- Dark maroon color
29. sunflower (seed only)
   - Seed (the part you eat) enclosed in a hard outer hull
     (the part you don't eat)
   - Black hull (oilseed types) or white and gray striped hull
     (confectionary types)
30. sweetclover
   Plant
   - Trifoliolate, pinnately compound leaves (leaflets do not
     all attach at same point like other clovers)
   - Serrations all the way around the oval leaflets (vs. alfalfa,
     which are only on the outer half)
   - Very long, yellow or white raceme inflorescence
   - Brown to black, one-seeded pods
   Seed
   - Yellow to brown color; each seed single color vs. red
clover
   - Mitt shape, thumb not as rounded as red clover
   - Crease in seed parallel to thumb
   - Seed smells sweet
31. switchgrass (plant only)
   - Large, open panicle (tree-like) inflorescence
   - One floret per spikelet
   - Glumes slightly separated at the tip of the spikelet,
     giving a V-like appearance
32. tall fescue
   Plant
   - Bunch grass with open, nodding panicle
   - Upper surface of leaf blades are heavily ribbed
   - Small glumes; not awned
   - Several florets per spikelet
   Seed
   - Dark straw color
   - ¼ inch long and enclosed in the lemma and palea
   - Slender, round, knobbed rachilla (golf tee appearance)
33. triticale
   Plant
   - Cross between wheat and rye
   - Head similar to wheat but more symmetrical; awns not
     twisted like in wheat
   - Broad glumes cover lemma versus thin-pointed glumes
     on rye
   Seed
   - Color similar to winter wheat
   - More pointed germ than wheat with more distinct
     brush
   - May be slightly wrinkled compared to wheat
34. white dent corn (seed only)
   - White seed with distinct dent on top
35. yellow dent corn (seed only)
   - Yellow seed with distinct dent on top

Noxious Weeds (NW)

1. bull thistle (plant only)
   - Biennial
   - Lobed leaves with pointed tip, toothed margins tipped
     with very sharp spines
   - Hairy leaves compared to musk thistle; green, topside
     and gray-green hairy (villous) underside
   - Solitary (single) head, much larger than Canada thistle
     with pinkish-purple flowers
   - Spines generally longer and sharper than on Canada
     thistle
2. bur ragweed (plant only)
   - Perennial that regrows from lateral roots
   - Deeply lobed, fern-like leaves
   - Similar to common ragweed but distinctly gray to silver
     on both sides
3. Canada thistle
   Plant
   - Perennial that regrows from lateral roots
   - Irregularly lobed, dark green, crimpled leaves with white
     undersides; slightly hairy on surface
   - Spines on the leaf margin, mid-rib and the stem; spines
     not as long as on bull thistle
   - Corymb-like clusters of small flower heads with pink to
     purple petals (rarely white)
   Seed
   - Light to dark brown color
   - Oblong, curved, and smooth
   - Smaller than bull or musk thistle
4. field bindweed
   Plant
   - Perennial that regrows from deep, lateral roots
   - Vine-like growth habit
   - Spade-shaped leaves that are parallel on sides
   - Trumpet-shaped white to pink flowers; flowers smaller
     than hedge bindweed
   - Bracts on the flower stalk about halfway down to the
     stem
   Seed
   - Dull, grayish-brown color with rough surface
   - Three angled with rounded corners (tall morningglory
     and wild buckwheat have more angular corners)
5. hoary cress
   Plant
   - Perennial with rhizomes
   - Erect stems with very fine hairs best seen near the base
   - Bottom leaves are spatulate; top leaves are broad with
     clasping bases
   - White flowers in flat-topped clusters
   - Seed pods rounded with projecting stigma
Seed
- Reddish-brown color
- Slightly flattened and egg-shaped
- Small crease upward from the small end

6. **johnsongrass**
   Plant
   - Perennial with rhizomes
   - Large, purplish, hairy, open panicle
   - Thinner stem and panicle branches than sudangrass
   Seed
   - Reddish-brown to black in color (although some tan, immature seeds may be present)
   - Two-knobbed pedicels equal in length
   - Smaller and thinner than sudangrass

7. **leafy spurge (plant only)**
   - Perennial with rhizomes
   - Slender, oblong leaves with a distinct midrib
   - Lower leaves in whorls
   - Broad leaves at the base of the flower
   - Yellow flowers in an umbel

8. **musk thistle (plant only)**
   - Biennial, grows as a rosette first year, flowers second year
   - Spiny leaves without hairs
   - Spines not as long and sharp as bull thistle
   - Dark green with white halo around the outer edge
   Seed
   - Larger than Canada thistle
   - More distinct lines than bull thistle

9. **quackgrass**
   Plant
   - Perennial with rhizomes
   - Alternate spikelets with broad sides lay flat against the rachis, but pushed to the side
   - Spikelets attach flat to the rachis
   - Clasping auricles
   Seed
   - sucker mouth on rachilla
   - Teeth on edges of the palea
   - Slight gap between edge of the palea and lemma

10. **Russian knapweed (plant only)**
    - Perennial with rhizomes
    - Very branched stems
    - Leaves broadly lanceolate with whitish underside
    - Pink to purple flowers
    - Small cup shaped head with scaly bracts

11. **sericea lespedeza (plant only)**
    - Perennial that regrows from a crown
    - Stiff, woody stem with densely packed trifoliolate leaves with grayish color
    - Leaflets narrower at the base than the tip

Common Weeds (CW)

12. **barnyardgrass**
    Plant
    - Annual grass
    - Smooth, broad leaves
    - No ligule
    - Dense, somewhat hairy panicle inflorescence
    Seed
    - Yellowish-gray color
    - Hulless seed is glossy on convex side (compared to washboard of yellow foxtail)
    - Flat on one side, convex on the other
    - Short awn with spiny hairs on sterile lemma and palea

13. **buffalobur (plant only)**
    - Annual broadleaf
    - Prickly stem with spines
    - Deeply lobed leaves, often with spines
    - Yellow flower
    - Spines on seed pod

14. **cheat**
    Plant
    - Annual grass
    - Heavy drooping panicle with five to 15 florets per spikelet
    Seed
    - Deep groove on palea side, lemma rolled giving canoe appearance
    - Coarse teeth on margin of palea
    - Awned, but shorter than on downy brome
    - Rachilla curved with a bulged top

15. **common cocklebur**
    Plant
    - Annual broadleaf
    - Rough stem with black spots
    - Rough, sandpapery leaves with a long petiole
    - Toothed leaf margins
    - Small flowers in compact composite head in upper leaf axils
    - Flower bud first appears without spines
    Seed
    - Found in spiny bur
    - Burs oblong with hooked spines radiating perpendicularly along its entire length
    - Two unevenly sized seeds per bur

16. **common dandelion (plant only)**
    Perennial
    - Leaves in a basal rosette
    - Stems straight and long; generally unbranched until near top
    - Small, bluish white flowers in the axils of each leaf
Deeply lobed leaves with smaller teeth on margins; lobes point back toward base
Yellow ray flowers in a head borne on a long, leafless stalk

17. common lambsquarters
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Upright, grooved stems, often striped
- Leaves grayish-white on underside; Christmas tree shape
- Green or purple flowers on narrow panicles
Seed
- Often contained in a papery, gray hull
- Hulled seed is dull or shiny black, lens-shaped, with a slight notch on one side
- Not quite as uniformly ovate or as shiny as redroot pigweed

18. common milkweed (plant only)
- Perennial that regrows from lateral roots
- Large, smooth, oval shaped, opposite leaves
- Thick stems contain milky juice
- 3- to 4-inch fat seed pods with projections on surface
- Large pear-shaped, pointed, dry follicle fruit opens on one side to expose seeds with large fluffy pappus

19. common ragweed
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Upright, branched stem
- Deeply lobed, finely divided leaves
- Yellow male flowers in terminal raceme of small drooping heads at top of the plant
- Female flowers in the leaf axis
Seed
- Gray, “woody” color
- Crown shape, but less pronounced than giant ragweed
- Smaller than giant ragweed

20. common waterhemp (plant only)
- Annual broadleaf, type of pigweed
- Smooth stems and leaves
- Leaves narrower than redroot pigweed or Palmer amaranth

21. curly dock
Plant
- Perennial broadleaf, regrows from crown on large taproot
- Leaves in a rosette; broad, lance-shaped, crinkled edges
- Prominent white sheath (ocrea) surrounds stem at the nodes
- Spear-like leaves in the inflorescence
- Papery seedhead with winged pods in dense clusters; turns dark brown at maturity
Seed
- Shiny, reddish-brown color when hulled
- Triangular shape with sharp corners

22. devilsclove (plant only)
- Annual broadleaf
- Very hairy, thick, large opposite leaves
- Large 5- to 6-inch-long seed pods borne in pairs
- Pods fat at the base and narrowing to a distinct hook with a sharp point at the end

23. dodder
Plant
- Annual parasite, anchors itself onto stems of other plants
- Vine-like growth habit
- No leaves or chlorophyll
- White flowers borne in knobby clusters
Seed
- Yellow to brown color
- Rough coat and dull appearance
- Generally rounded, but irregular in size and shape

24. downy brome
Plant
- Annual grass
- Pubescent stems
- Soft, drooping panicle
Seed
- Red, brown, or straw color
- Long, slender, and flattened; more pointed tip than smooth bromegrass or cheat
- Long awns and pubescent lemma

25. eastern black nightshade
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Erect, widely branched stems
- Shiny, smooth green leaves; often purple on underside
- Tiny, “tinker-bell,” white flowers
- Flower branches attached at leafless node
- Round, black, toxic berries at maturity
Seed
- Yellow to dark brown color
- Small, flat seed with dull surface
- Shape of a pepper seed but very much smaller

26. fall panicum (plant only)
- Annual grass
- Large, branched, open panicle with single seeded spikelets
- Spikelets smaller than switchgrass

27. field pennycress
Plant
- Annual or winter annual broadleaf
- Oblong, somewhat notched leaves with no hairs
- White flowers in long racemes
- Papery, winged pods with a notch in the top
- Leaves and stems “smooth like a penny” (versus peach-fuzz hairs on hoary cress)
28. giant ragweed

- Annual broadleaf
- Upright, pubescent stem
- Leaves usually three-lobed, except near the top of the plant where they may not be lobed
- Leaves are opposite and serrated
- Yellow male flowers in terminal raceme of drooping heads at the top of the plant
- Female flowers in the leaf axils below the males

29. green foxtail

- Annual grass
- Leaves without hairs on upper blade surface
- Dense, cylindrical panicle with one to three bristles per spikelet
- Seeds smaller and arranged randomly within head compared to yellow foxtail

30. hedge bindweed (plant only)

- Perennial from deep lateral roots
- Vine-like growth habit
- Five-pointed arrowhead leaves with squared bottom lobes
- Large, white, trumpet-shaped flower
- Larger flowers than field bindweed
- No bracts on flower stalk like field bindweed
- Two large sepal-like bracts cover base of flower (cover the bud before petals show)

31. hemp (marijuana) (plant only)

- Annual broadleaf
- Distinct palmately compound leaves with seven to nine serrated leaflets
- Leaflets dark green on top and gray on bottom
- Separate male and female flowers

32. hemp dogbane (plant only)

- Perennial that regrows from rootstocks
- Smooth, oval shaped leaves attached opposite on stiff, thin branches
- Upper stems often highly branched
- Thin, round seed pods borne in pairs; 2 to 3 inches long

33. henbit (plant only)

- Annual broadleaf
- Slender, smooth, square stems
- Opposite, hairy leaves with rounded teeth
- Leaves generally sessile, except at base of stem where they may be petioled
- Pinkish to purple flowers in whorls in the axis of upper leaves

34. honeyvine milkweed (plant only)

- Perennial that regrows from deep rootstocks
- Vining stem with opposite, heart shaped leaves with distinct white veins
- Flower clusters borne at the nodes
- 3- to 4-inch, fat, follicle seed pods open on one side to expose seeds with large fluffy pappus
- Pods smoother than common milkweed

35. horsenettle (plant only)

- Perennial that regrows from lateral roots
- Stem covered with yellow spines
- Large, wavy lobed leaf with spines on underside along midrib
- Lavender flowers with large yellow stamens
- Yellow/orange berries look like small tomatoes

36. jimsonweed

- Annual broadleaf
- Sturdy, erect stems
- Large, flat, lobed, glabrous leaves
- Large, trumpet-shaped flower
- Huge, pointed calyx tube covers flower bud until petals show
- Spiny seed pods look like giant cocklebur

37. jointed goatgrass

- Winter annual grass
- Jointed and cylindrical head, with long awns on terminal spikelet at the tip
- One spikelet per node

Seed
- Brown to dull black color with pitted surface
- Gentle, smooth edges on top of wrinkles versus buffalobur
- Distinct hilum scar
38. **kochia**
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Erect and freely branching stems
- Simple, narrow leaves; longer at base of stems, but decrease to \( \frac{1}{2} \) inch or less at top
- Flowers greenish, changing to red when ripe
- Seed pods usually in pairs in the leaf axil
Seed
- May be covered by papery, star-shaped calyx
- Seed in the hull is flat and star shaped
- Seed without hull is dull black, teardrop shaped, and concave on both sides

39. **large crabgrass**
Plant
- Annual grass
- Hairy sheath and stem, stems often grow prostrate
- Three or more racemes per stem
- Single seeded spikelets lay flat against rachis, alternating along one side
- Mid vein of rachis weaves back and forth
Seed
- Flat on one side, rounded to oval on the other
- Striped and may be hairy
- Three veins on the flat side of the seed
- Narrow, pointed glume often still attached and extending about half way up the back

40. **longspine sandbur (plant only)**
- Annual grass
- Bunch grass with short internodes
- Short, zigzag spikes with very spiny, round spikelets attached

41. **morningglory**
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Vine-like growth habit
- Heart-shaped leaf
- Hairy stem and leaves
- Purple to blue, trumpet-like flower
Seed
- Flat black or brown with a dark hilum
- Wedge-shaped like an orange slice (larger and edges sharper than on field bindweed)

42. **Palmer amaranth (plant only)**
- Annual broadleaf, type of pigweed
- Smooth, broad leaves on long petioles
- Separate male and female plants
- Elongated male heads are smooth, females are spiny

43. **Pennsylvania smartweed**
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Erect red stems with swollen nodes and papery ocrea
- Simple, long, lanceolate leaves
- Pink flowers in a short, dense spike
Seed
- Reddish-brown to glossy black color
- Round and flat, except for pointed tip on basal end
- May still be covered by a pink or brown papery petals

44. **prickly lettuce (plant only)**
- Annual broadleaf
- Elongated, lobed leaves with short spines all along the bottom of the midrib
- Small yellow flowers on thin branched inflorescence
- Stems with milky juice

45. **prickly sida**
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Smooth, broad leaves on long petioles
- Separate male and female plants
- Elongated male heads are smooth, females are spiny

46. **prostrate knotweed (plant only)**
- Annual broadleaf
- Prostrate stems with swollen nodes
- Simple, lanceolate leaves with a bluish cast

47. **prostrate spurge (plant only)**
- Annual broadleaf
- Creeping stems with small, oval, leaves attached opposite
- Stems with milky juice

48. **puncturevine**
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Weak, prostrate, hairy stems with pinnately compound leaves
- Leaflets opposite and elliptical-shaped
- Single, yellow flower and seed clusters found in the leaf axil
Seed
- Yellow bur with broad, sharp spines
- Wedge shaped (looks like a goat-head)

49. **redroot pigweed**
Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Upright, pubescent stem and petioles (common water-hemp and Palmer amaranth are both smooth)
- Red tinge on the lower stem
- Flowers in dense head with bristly bracts
50. **Russian thistle**

*Plant*
- Annual broadleaf
- Bushy, upright growth with many branches
- Mature plants with slender, stiff leaves ending in spines
- Immature plants with longer, needle-like or grass-like leaves
- Flowers and seeds in leaf axis

*Seed*
- Gray to tan color
- Conical seed, shaped like a cup (no protrusion from the top of the cup like common ragweed) (more thickness versus the flat appearance of kochia in the hull)
- Spirally grooved, appearing like a cinnamon roll if hulled out

51. **shattercane**

*Plant*
- Annual grass
- Sorghum relative; taller, thinner stem than grain sorghum
- Panicle inflorescence that is more compact than johnsongrass; shiny seeds shatter easily when ripe

*Seed*
- Surrounded by shiny, hard black to brown glumes
- Similar in size to grain sorghum, larger than johnsongrass

52. **smooth groundcherry (plant only)**

*Perennial broadleaf that regrows from rootstocks*
- Smooth, elliptical leaves with undulated edges
- Yellow flowers in small clusters arising between leaf nodes
- Berry fruits surrounded by large, closed calyx (lantern-like) (versus eastern black nightshade with exposed berries)

53. **tansy mustard (plant only)**

*Winter annual broadleaf*
- Stems simple below and branched above
- Fern-like leaves with many delicate lobes
- Yellow flowers in terminal racemes
- Long, slender pods with a knob on the end

54. **treacle mustard (plant only)**

*Winter annual broadleaf*
- Highly branched stems gives plant a rounded shape
- Only about 1 foot tall
- Small yellow flowers in stiff racemes
- Thin seed pods 1 to 2 inches long

55. **velvetleaf**

*Plant*
- Annual broadleaf
- Tall, erect, velvety stems
- Simple, rounded, pointed, velvety leaves
- Orange-yellow flowers
- Seed in hairy, round, beaked capsules with many chambers

*Seed*
- Gray color and rough surface
- Notched on one side; catcher’s mitt shape
- Larger than Venice mallow

56. **Venice mallow**

*Plant*
- Annual broadleaf
- Erect, spreading hairy stem
- Alternate, irregularly shaped and lobed leaves
- Pale yellow to white flowers often with a purple margin and dark center
- Hairy seed pod capsule surrounded by papery calyx

*Seed*
- Grayish black color
- Rough, kidney-shaped with dimple on one side
- Smaller and more rounded than velvetleaf

57. **western salsify (plant only)**

*Monocarpic perennial, regrows vegetatively for several years, but then dies after seed production*
- Thick, round, unbranched stems with fleshy grass-like leaves
- Daisy-like yellow composite flowers about 1 to 2 inches in diameter
- Mature head forms large, round pappus ball (looks like a giant dandelion)

58. **wild buckwheat**

*Plant*
- Annual broadleaf
- Vine-like stems
- Arrow-shaped leaf with pointed tip and pointed basal lobes
- Multiple flowers and seeds per stalk
- Papery covering (ocrea) around nodes

*Seed*
- Glossy black color
- Three-sided with sharp corners (compared to field bindweed with rounded corners)
- Brown hull often attached

59. **wild onion (plant only)**

*Perennial growing from bulbs*
- Hollow slender stems; onion-like
- Flowers replaced by bulblets
60. wild sunflower

Plant
- Annual broadleaf
- Simple, rough, serrated leaves
- Rough stem with scattered short white hairs
- Flowers are daisy-like with yellow rays and brown disk
  flowers in center
Seed
- Gray to brown color with light stripes
- Wedge-shaped achene
- Smaller than cultivated sunflower

61. yellow foxtail

Plant
- Annual grass
- Long hairs at the base of the leaves near collar
- Dense panicle with five or more bristles per spikelet;
  gives foxtail appearance
- Seeds larger and arranged in neat rows within the head
  compared to green foxtail
Seed
- Straw yellow color
- Short glume on convex side covers less than half of the
  seed
- Surface of the lemma has irregular, transverse ridges
  (washboard appearance)
- Larger than green foxtail

62. yellow nutsedge (plant only)

- Perennial that regrows from tubers
- Triangular stem and three-ranked leaves
- Leaves similar to grasses
- Yellowish-brown, "bushy" flower cluster

Reviewed and revised by

Kevin J. Donnelly, Professor of Agronomy
Dallas E. Peterson, Extension Weed Science Specialist
Gerry L. Posler, Professor of Agronomy, retired
Gary Kilgore, Southeast Area Crops and Soils Specialist, retired

Publications are reviewed or revised annually by appropriate faculty to reflect current research and practice.
Date shown is that of publication or last revision.
Brand names appearing in this publication are for product identification purposes only. No endorsement is intended,
nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.
Publications from Kansas State University are available at: www.ksre.ksu.edu
Contents of this publication may be freely reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case,
credit Kevin J. Donnelly, et al., 4-H Crops and Weeds Contest, Kansas State University, April 2014.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
4H713 rev

K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, as amended. Kansas State University, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and United States Department of Agriculture Cooperating, John D. Floros, Director.