



FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

2021



Staying Hydrated During the Winter

During the colder winter months, we often do not feel thirsty and neglect staying hydrated. Since the ground hog saw its shadow, it appears we are going to have a least 6 more weeks of winter. A quick reminder of the importance of staying hydrated seems timely.

Why Do We Need to Stay Hydrated?

Water makes up about 60% of our body weight and is our main chemical component. We need water for our cells, tissues, and organs to function properly. Water helps us get rid of waste, regulate our body temperature, lubricate and cushion our joints, and protect sensitive tissues. Not getting enough water can lead to dehydration, which causes tiredness, confusion, headaches, and other unpleasant conditions.

How Much Water Should We Drink?

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Mayo Clinic, the following are the recommended amounts of fluids you should drink daily (includes water, other beverages, and fluids provided in food, the last which typically makes up 20% of what we need each day):

- About 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids a day for men
- About 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids a day for women

“Drink eight 8oz glasses of water a day” is also easy-to-remember advice. Most people can stay hydrated by drinking water and other fluids throughout the day when thirsty. But for some eight glasses a day may not be enough. Several factors determine an individual’s water needs:

- **Exercise.** If you sweat during activities, you will need to drink extra water to replace fluid loss.
- **Environment/Temperature.** Living and exercising in hot and humid climates can make you sweat and lead to dehydration, which can also occur at high altitudes.
- **Overall health.** When you have a fever or experience vomiting or diarrhea, your body loses fluids, so you will need to increase your intake of fluids to replace their loss.

How to Use and Care for Reusable Water Bottles

Using a reusable water bottle is not only a convenient way to drink the recommended amount of daily fluids per day, it also offers public and private benefits. To ensure that you are drinking uncontaminated water, follow these recommendations for the proper use and care of reusable water bottles:

- **Hand-wash every day**– Use soap, warm water, and a brush to clean the inside and outside of your bottle. Then rinse it out and leave it to air dry.
- **Sanitize once a week**– Soak bottle parts in sanitizing solution for two minutes, rinse, and air dry. Sanitizing Solution: mix 1/2 tsp of 8.25% bleach with 4 cups of water.
- **Avoid spreading germs**– Do not share your water bottle with someone else.

Water is a basic need for human survival and overall health. Drinking water and consuming foods and beverages with notable fluid content is a great way to meet the daily recommendation for fluid intake.



Annual Weeds in Springtime

Annual weeds are often the most prevalent problem for springtime growers. They have become so successful at taking over fields and gardens because they have become adapted to the environment, we have given them. Annual weeds care about 1 thing: producing as many seeds as possible before dying. To achieve this goal, annual weeds usually try to get a head start on everything. They want to be the first to germinate, the first to fill up space and absorb sunlight, and the first to maturity, when it is more difficult to kill them out. But their desperate need to be to the front of the line can also be their Achilles heel.

Annual weeds that you fight with all year long may have been taken care of at the first of the year. A light tillage or early herbicide application is more than enough to kill a weed in the early spring before planting, but is rarely sufficient once the plant has matured. Scout early and often to know what is in your field. Each annual weed has its own aspects that make it unique. Here's a few weeds that are repeat offenders of your green space:

Annual Kochia. This one is fairly common everywhere. It is a very prolific seed producer and can grow anywhere from a few inches tall to 5 ft. tall. When it reaches tall heights, it can turn into a tumbleweed and spread it's seed along every fence it catches on. It is very good at developing resistance to herbicides, and there are populations in Idaho that are resistant to multiple herbicides. The time to kill this plant is when it is small. It can be identified at a young stage by the white hairs being thicker on the underside of the leaf.

Redroot Pigweed. As you can imagine, this one has a very distinct red taproot, but the only way to actually see that is to physically pull the plant up and look at it. It also produces a lot of small black seeds and can grow quite tall. It is related to a host of other members of the pigweed family, which are all equally annoying. Control must happen early in the spring, often before other crops are planted. At a young stage they can be identified by the small notch in the very tip of their leaves.

Common Lambsquarter. This plant is one you need a trained eye for, because the leaves vary from looking like a goose's foot to very narrow leaves toward the end of its life. It has a pale green color and often has a purple hue on the underside of some leaves. It usually grows on disturbed sights or in unused corrals. It makes a lot of seeds (are you noticing a trend?). Young lambsquarter can be identified by the small white droplets on the leaves that feel wet when you touch them. It must be controlled while it is young.

Russian Thistle. This is the most common tumbleweed people think of when they think of an old west. The best way to tell Russian thistle tumbleweeds from kochia tumbleweeds is to pick them up. If it pokes you with thorns it is Russian thistle. It spreads its seeds across the landscape by tumbling across the field. Tumbleweeds can only be controlled with a good propane torch, but that doesn't control any of the seeds they have already produced and spread everywhere. The real way to control them is, you guessed it, when they are young in the spring! They look like little soft pine needles that emerge from the ground. They can be grazed early on, but they quickly develop a spiny defense.

When you are looking to control weeds in every aspect of life, remember to be adaptable or the weeds will crowd out what is important. Look out for weeds early. During March and April when you are getting excited about working the ground, make sure you take an inventory of the weeds you have so you can control them early on before they are a problem. If you have any problems with weed identification or control, feel free to contact me at jsagers@uidaho.edu.

4-H News

- 4-H registration is going on now, don't forget to register. If you have any questions please call the office at 208-745-6685
- Refer to your flyer that was sent out to the 4-H families for up-coming events and scholarship opportunities. If you didn't receive a flyer please call the office and we will send you one.

 **4-H GROWS HERE**