

**The Enemy:** Kochia (*Bassia scoparia*)

**Strategy:** This annual weed that can grow up 1 to 6 feet. This native plant of Asia has become one of the worst weeds in our development and agricultural communities. Kochia can be found anywhere from the smallest gardens, to the alley-ways, to gravel and asphalted road shoulders, and even affects all agricultural fields. This plant is very green, with slightly hairy leaves (especially when young) with one main stem with off shoots that taper to the top and produces a very small cream flower. Later in the summer it is a major contributor to allergies.

**ATTACK:** This plant competes for sunlight and nutrients for all desirable vegetation. It produces over 10,000 seeds per plant and can germinate all summer long. An even bigger problem is when this plant dries up later in the summer it becomes huge fire hazard and becomes a TUMBLE WEED the following year. It germinates from seed with each rain storm throughout the summer. It contains toxins that can be hazardous to horses and cattle and becomes a major distracter along roadsides.

**DEFENSE:** Getting an early start on controlling this weed is key to limiting its damage. Once this plant becomes knee high it is very tough to control. Since this plant is an annual it can be controlled by mechanical means (shovel, disking, plowing, etc). Mowing is very ineffective because the plant will simply grow back within a week. There are numerous herbicides that can be used especially Dicamba (Banvel, Vanquish, or Clarity), and Fluroxypyr (Vista or Starane). 2,4-D has little effect on this plant. I must caution you in that this plant has biotypes that are resistant to many herbicides, even the ones listed above. Rotation of classes of herbicides is very important to manage the weed. Persistent revegetation will help. As always call your local Weed Authority for more details.