

# Witchweed in Maize

*Striga asiatica*, *Striga hermothica* Kaufiti



Purple witchweed on maize (USDA APHIS PPQ - Oxford, North Carolina, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org)



*S. asiatica* (Photo by Ton Rulkens, Flickr.com)

Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control	Direct Control	Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use certified crop seed to reduce the chance of contamination</li> <li>• Seeds are transported by water - Construct contours and water ways to prevent runoff from carrying Striga seed from infested land to clean fields</li> <li>• Seeds travel on machinery - clean farm equipment after work in infested areas</li> <li>• Avoid grazing animals in Striga-infested areas</li> <li>• Crop rotation with broadleaved non-hosts and fallows may help to deplete seed bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Striga is prevalent in areas with low soil fertility and poor rainfall, such as Lilongwe-Kasungu-Mzimba plains, Shire highlands, Shire Valley, Machinga, Balaka, Manjawira</li> <li>• Look for a small plant, 10 - 30 cm tall, rough to touch with bright red or orange-pink flowers growing in close contact with maize</li> <li>• Look for stunted crop growth</li> <li>• Detect the presence of weed by planting trap crops such as Desmodium, if present consider direct control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light infestations can usually be controlled by hand pulling or hoeing before seed is produced</li> <li>• Seeds are very long-lived, therefore uproot before seed set</li> <li>• Improved soil fertility is a vital key to long-term control, whether by organic, inorganic or green manuring or agroforestry techniques involving mulching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of chemical herbicides may lead to the development of herbicide resistance.</li> <li>• When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.</li> <li>• Use 2, 4- D amine salt post emergence herbicides to control the weed in maize monocrop applied once at 3 - 4 weed leaf stage. If rains continue and more weeds grow then a second application is necessary (2l/ha) which translates to 60 ml of herbicide (2, 4 D 480SL) into 15 litres of water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHO class II (moderately hazardous)</li> </ul>



## Malawi

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