




# Witchweed (Kurisuka) in Maize

Kinyarwanda: Kurisuka, Mugabudatsimburwa, Bariyentaraza; French: Herbe des sorcières, Striga; English: purple witchweed (*S. hermonthica*), Asiatic witchweed (*S. asiatica*)

	Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control	Direct Control	Restrictions
 <p>Purple witchweed infestation © USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Bugwood.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use clean seed to reduce the risk of contamination</li> <li>Clean field equipment or tools and vehicles to remove any Striga seeds after working in Striga infested areas</li> <li>Apply farmyard manure or mineral fertilizers to enhance soil fertility</li> <li>Intercrop maize with beans or soybean as trap crops, or with <i>Desmodium uncinatum</i> to suppress Striga seed in soil and deplete the seed bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional relevant crops: Sorghum</li> <li>Look for annual, erect, broad-leaved parasitic weed (30-100cm high). <i>Striga hermonthica</i> has large pink flowers, while <i>Striga asiatica</i> has small purple flowers</li> <li>Look for yellowish blotches in crop foliage about 1 cm long by 0.5 cm wide or stunted crop growth, even if the weed has not emerged. Uprooting may confirm the presence of young parasite seedlings on the roots</li> <li>Regular (every two weeks) check for flowering and seed development to prevent seed set, spread and build up of seed bank in the field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light infestations can usually be controlled by hand pulling or hoeing to prevent Striga plants from flowering and producing seed and thereby from further spread</li> <li>Improved soil fertility is a vital key to long-term control, whether by organic (e.g. Farm Yard Manure), inorganic (e.g. NPK) or green manuring (e.g. intercropping with <i>Mucuna</i>)</li> <li>Crop rotation with non-hosts, i.e. broadleaf crops such as beans or soybean is appropriate for maize</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>Application of chemical pesticides on emerged weed has been reported not cost-effective</li> <li>Seed dressing with Imidazolinone herbicide (e.g.: Imazapyr or StrigAway). Apply Imazapyr at 30-45g/ha of active ingredient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imazapyr: WHO Class U (unlikely to present acute hazard in normal use). Carefully respect instructions and recommended dose as indicated on the label</li> </ul>
 <p>Purple witchweed on maize © USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Bugwood.org</p>					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-dose herbicide seed dressing controls Striga without impacting on sensitive intercrops when these are planted at least 10 cm away from the maize.</li> </ul>
 <p><i>Striga asiatica</i> © Ton Rulkens, flickr</p>					



## Rwanda

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AUTHOR(S): Samuel Nshutiayesu (UR-CST), Alexandre Rutikanga (UTAB), Déo Ndikumana (UTAB)

EDITED BY: Plantwise