



DODDER IN NEVADA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS DODDER?

Dodder is an annual parasitic plant that infests crops, ornamentals, native plants and weeds. This species of plant produces “haustoria” which are described as sucker like roots that penetrate the host plant to feed itself. There are over 150 known species worldwide but dodder is most prevalent in the Americas.

WHAT DOES DODDER LOOK LIKE?

Dodder has long, thin stems varying in color from green, to yellow, to orange. The stems wrap themselves around host plants. Some species have leaves and flowers, while others consist of just the stems.



IS DODDER INVASIVE?

Dodder, both native and non-native species are considered invasive. Even native species can have a negative impact on other native plants in the area.

One invasive variety, Japanese dodder, *Cuscuta japonica*, grows as an annual but may overwinter on its host plant making the lifecycle more similar to perennial species. It’s much thicker than the native varieties and rarely flowers. This species was recently discovered (2004) in California and is considered to have to have a greater negative impact than the native varieties.

HOW DOES DODDER MOVE INTO A REGION?

Dodder grows from seeds which are likely spread via people through the movement of soil, equipment, or mud attached to shoes or tires. Water may also play a role in the spread especially for infestations near aquatic environments. Seeds can remain viable in the soil up to 20 years.

Japanese dodder rarely produce flowers and is reported not to produce viable seeds, so the species is only spread vegetatively, where fragments of the stem can attach to other host plants and begin to feed off of that new host. Humans are likely the primary dispersal agent of plant fragments, but birds and other wildlife may also spread fragments.



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WHAT KINDS OF DODDER ARE FOUND IN NEVADA?

There are annual, native species of dodder found in Nevada. Due to the recent amount of precipitation, there will likely be an increase in dodder. At this time, the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) has not confirmed any reports of Japanese dodder in Nevada, only annual species, and preventing seed production should be a priority. (More information on management options available on the next page.)

WHAT PLANTS ARE MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO DODDER?

Common plants susceptible to dodder include asparagus, nightshade plants, melons, allium, root vegetables, peppers, tomatoes, chrysanthemums, ivy, fennel, mint, morning glory, etc.

Monocot species such as grasses and lilies are unlikely to be affected by dodder.

WHAT MANAGEMENT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS DODDER?

Successful control of dodder involves the use of integrated weed management. A single control method is unlikely to be effective. Effective management should include preventing further spread for the species, preventing seed production for existing populations and monitoring to identify and remove emerging seedlings.

- Use certified weed-free products or other products known to be free from dodder.
- Clean clothing and equipment before moving from an area infested with the species.
- Plant nonhost species such as grasses and other monocot species.
- Physically remove emerging seedlings and plants prior to seed production to help reduce populations. Hand pulling is only effective if the entire vine is removed from the plant as plant parts can also propagate and spread. In areas with severe infestations removing and destroying the host plant may be necessary.

Herbicide applications can also be part of integrated weed management, but it is important to note that it may impact the host species as well as non-target species. Chemical control may include preemergent applications to address the existing seed bank or post emergent applications of triclopyr or glyphosate.

SHOULD I REPORT SIGNS OF DODDER GROWING?

Dodder is currently not defined as a noxious weed in Nevada. Infestations of dodder can be reported through EDDMapS or directly to local [Cooperative Weed Management Areas](#) or [Conservation District](#) for evaluation and possible management recommendations and actions.