

WILD SORGHUM

SORGHUM ARUNDINACEUM

INTRODUCTION

Wild sorghum also known as Rhodesian Sudan grass is an annual or short-lived perennial grass, found in coastal areas of Queensland and Northern New South Wales. It has become a serious problem in sugarcane, especially in the Burdekin region.

DESCRIPTION

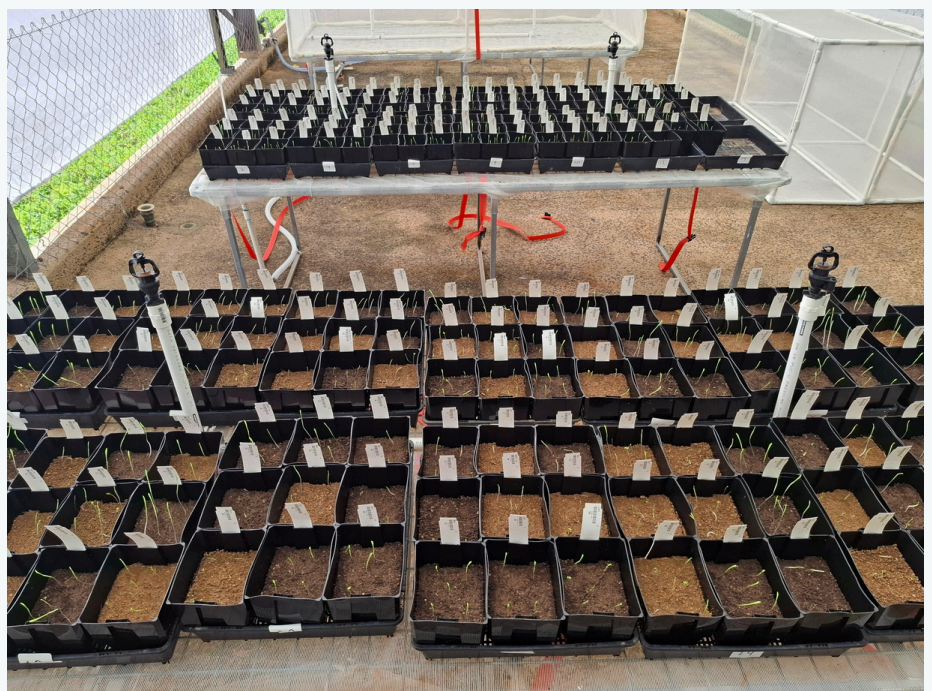
S. arundinaceum is a robust grass growing up to 4m, with long, flat deep green leaves and a loose open and drooping panicle. The seeds are encased in hairy, reddish-brown to black husks that shatter easily when ripe. Unlike other sorghum weeds (Johnson grass and Columbus grass), *S. arundinaceum* does not produce underground rhizomes.



Wild sorghum seed heads.

DISTRIBUTION

Native to Africa and the Indian subcontinent, it has been introduced in many tropical and subtropical regions of the world in the Americas and Oceania. In Australia, it is found in the coastal areas of Queensland and northern New South Wales. It is becoming a serious concern in sugarcane in the Burdekin region. It is the wild progenitor of cultivated sorghum, *Sorghum bicolor*.



Pot trial comparing the efficacy of pre-emergent herbicides on wild sorghum.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

The only herbicide registered for use in sugarcane to control wild sorghum is MSMA spot sprayed. Post-emergent screening trials are in progress and this factsheet will be updated with new data by end 2026.

Pre-emergent herbicides

No pre-emergent herbicides are currently registered for use in sugarcane to control wild sorghum. Two replicated pot trials conducted by SRA showed that a range of pre-emergent herbicides effectively control wild sorghum seeds as they emerge. The pot trials compared the herbicide efficacy in different soil types. Refer to product labels to understand their conditions of use in your specific environment and to prevent crop damage.



Wild sorghum.

ACTIVE INGREDIENT	COMMERICAL NAME AND RATE	EFFICACY ON THREE DIFFERENT SOIL TYPES*		
		Clay soil	Delta soil	Red loam soil
isoxaflutole + hexazinone	0.15 L/ha Balance [®] Flow + 2 L/ha AC Tressel	100%	100%	100%
metribuzin	2 kg/ha Mentor [®] WG	100%	100%	100%
diuron + hexazinone	4 kg/ha Barrage	100%	100%	100%
trifluralin	3 L/ha Treflan [®]	100%	100%	100%
imazapic + hexazinone	0.63 kg/ha Bobcat [®] i-MAXX SG	100%	99%	100%
metolachlor	2.5 L/ha Dual Gold [®]	100%	100%	99%
isoxaflutole	0.3 L/ha Balance [®] Flow	100%	100%	98%
isoxaflutole + terbuthylazine	2 kg/ha Palmero [®] TX	100%	100%	N/A
amicarbazone	1 kg/ha AmiTron [®] 700 WG	93%	96%	98%
imazapic + isoxaflutole	0.2 L/ha Blaze + 0.15 L/ha Balance [®] Flow	92%	97%	100%
flumioxazin	0.7 kg/ha Valor [®]	79%	91%	100%
imazapic	0.4 L/ha Blaze	57%	96%	100%
pendimethalin	3.3 L/ha Stomp [®] Xtra	62%	12%	0%

*Efficacy expressed in biomass reduction compared to untreated control.

MECHANICAL CONTROL

As this plant is annual or short-lived perennial, preventing seed production is crucial.

Mechanical control such as tillage or roguing before seed set can be effective options.

FARM HYGIENE

If moving from areas where the wild sorghum occurs, to areas that are weed-free, wash down farm vehicles and machinery to remove any soil.

REFERENCES

https://keys.lucidcentral.org/keys/v3/AusGrass/key/AusGrass/Media/Html/SO_RGHUM/SORARU.HTML

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