

TerraLink Horticulture Inc.

# Hoof Print

Newsletter  
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## Equine Diseases

### Virkon – A Broad Spectrum Disinfectant

In January 2009 an article about Strangles appeared in this publication. Although many farms have this disease under control, it is still a problem in many places in the Fraser Valley. Strangles is a highly infectious disease that is easily passed through nose-to-nose contact or by sharing brushes and other items. The bacteria from nasal discharge can survive up to eight weeks on tack or wood (Intervet Schering – Plough Animal Health, Dec 12, 2008).

Any biosecurity program to control Strangles or other equine diseases should include vaccination, medication and hygiene – a three-tiered “triangle of protection”. Practicing strict hygiene can help prevent the spread of pathogens by using Virkon – the leading disinfectant for equine pathogens. Virkon has been proven effective against a wide group of viral, bacterial and fungal pathogens that cause equine diseases, including Strangles. Virkon is best used following removal of excessive organic material from stalls, and after the use of an appropriate cleaner. Apply Virkon at the recommended rates using a backpack sprayer or other suitable device.



## Richardson Seed

### Hay Baler



Richardson Seeds Hay Baler Forage Seed Mixture is a high-performance forage blend designed for high-quality hay production. This mixture contains a large portion of orchard grass (47%), to which Joliette Timothy (27%) and Barolex Tall Fescue (14%) have been added to enhance the feed value. A small percentage of annual ryegrass (12%) has also been added to act as a nurse crop until the stand gets established. The components of this mixture have been selected with productivity and palatability in mind to produce top-quality haylage. Richardson Seed forage mixtures do not contain endophyte-enhanced grasses.

## Locations

### Roddick Feed, Farm & Garden

Are you located in the western Fraser Valley? If so, you can find us in Ladner at Roddick Feed, Farm and Garden, 4119 – 40th Street, Delta, phone 604-946-2771. You will find an extensive selection of quality tack for Western or English riding. Keeping your horse healthy and in trim athletic condition is vital. A healthy horse is stronger,

lives longer and is happier overall. That’s why proper equine nutrition is so important. At Roddick’s, we’ll ensure you walk away with the right balance of daily feed and supplements for your horses. Whether it’s hay, sack feed, bird seed, or cat and dog food, we’ve got it at competitive prices.

## Trade Show Summary

### The Mane Event



The Mane Event in October 2009 was another great success and we would like to say thanks to everyone that stopped by to say hi, asked questions, and entered our first ever Mane Event Draw. On that note, with over 300 draw entries, we would like to say congratulations to our winner from Oliver, who took home the grand prize consisting of 1 bag of horse and sheep pasture mix, 3 bags of 18-18-18 fertilizer and a basic soil test, a \$200.00 value.



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## Weed Comparison

# Did You Know?

There are two weeds that are similar at first glance; Tansy Ragwort (see other article in this advisor) and Common St. John's Wort. It is important to know the difference between them. Why? Both are toxic to some degree, and Tansy Ragwort is listed under the Canadian Seeds Act as a Primary Noxious Weed. Besides being much more toxic to stock than Common St. John's Wort, Tansy is capable of causing economic damage by infesting many acres of range and pasture. We won't go into the differences in toxicity in this article, instead focusing on how to tell the difference between the two weeds.

Tansy Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) is a biennial in the sunflower family. Forming a rosette as a younger plant, from a taproot it grows single stems as tall as 4 feet in ideal conditions. The leaves are very deeply divided and 2 to 8 inches long, and grow alternately on the stem. Like a sunflower, the yellow flowers are of two types; central disk flowers and ray or petals. Flowers are notably clustered at the top.

Common St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) is a perennial. It grows multiple stems up to 3 feet long, resembling a bush. The leaves are long ovals not more than one inch in length. A very distinctive feature is the presence of tiny transparent dots on the bottom of the leaves that are apparent when held up to a light source. Flowers are the same bright yellow as Tansy Ragwort, but have only five petals, no central disk like a sunflower, and have long and obvious stamens.

Now you know!



St. John's Wort



Tansy ragwort flowers

## Toxic Weeds

# Tansy Ragwort

Tansy ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) is a commonly found poisonous weed in the Lower Fraser Valley and on southern Vancouver Island. Originally introduced into North America as a medicinal herb, tansy ragwort has been causing increasing levels of pasture loss and livestock deaths since the 1950's.

Tansy ragwort is a short-lived perennial weed that can grow as tall as 4 feet in ideal conditions. One ragwort plant can produce 150,000 seeds which are easily dispersed by wind, water and animals. These seeds can stay dormant in the soil for many years and can germinate in both spring and fall. This makes control of this weed challenging at times.

Tansy ragwort contains at least six pyrrolizidine alkaloids which by themselves are not toxic. Once the plant has been ingested, these alkaloids combine with liver enzymes which are then converted into pyrroles which results in liver dysfunction. Horses, Cattle and Goats are most seriously affected and can be poisoned by consuming only 2 to 8 percent of their body weight. While grazing animals will generally avoid consuming this weed, it is recommended that animals be kept off pastures that contain more than 5% tansy ragwort.

## Symptoms

Tansy poisoning is generally cumulative, by eating small amounts over an extended period of time, and may occur even after the animal has been removed from the pasture. Symptoms include photosensitization, depression, loss of appetite, restlessness and aimless wandering, walking into objects, yellow or muddy discolouration of mucous membranes and an unpleasant pig-like skin odour.

## Control

### Prevention

Don't let Tansy Ragwort go to seed. Hand-pull isolated plants and small patches and remove as much of the root as possible. In heavy infestations you must mow often and thoroughly to do any good. Plants mowed after flowering begins can still produce seed.

Maintain a healthy competitive forage stand by regularly overseeding forage grasses and legumes, fertilizing according to soil needs and avoiding overgrazing. Reseeding any soil disturbances such as rodent push-ups, hoof marks, vehicle tracks, etc is highly recommended. Ragwort quickly establishes where soil is exposed or where forage grass is in a weakened condition.



Tansy rosette

### Chemical Control

Tansy Ragwort can be easily controlled in the seedling to young rosette stage with 2,4-D Amine with a rate of up to 1.6L/acre. Applying in early spring or mid-fall when active new growth is occurring is most effective. When rosettes are large or in more advanced growth stages, Banvel at the recommended rate of 800mL/acre can provide excellent control. Since both chemicals are a selective broadleaf herbicide, clover may also be damaged. Remove animals from treated pastures for 7-10 days as these herbicides can increase the palatability of poisonous plants. USE CAUTION WHEN USING HERBICIDES AND READ THE LABEL BEFORE USE.

### References:

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/tansy.htm>

[http://www.coastalinvasiveplants.com/invasive\\_plants.php?id=36](http://www.coastalinvasiveplants.com/invasive_plants.php?id=36)

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/tansyrag.htm>

[http://weedsbc.ca/pdf/tansy\\_ragwort.pdf](http://weedsbc.ca/pdf/tansy_ragwort.pdf)