

The ENEMY: Chicory (*Cichorium intybus* L.)

THE STRATEGY: This a perennial, with milky juice, produced from a single taproot. The plant has numerous branches that start at the base and produce many blue flowers at the axils of the branch. The flower heads are ribbed and tipped by a crown of small scales. This plant of the aster family will not grow in very dense patches but will colonize and take up over half of a pasture. The plant is undesirable for livestock, but was originally brought into the country from the Mediterranean area as a salad add-on and a replacement for coffee.

Attack: Chicory is generally found along ditch banks and in fields that are flooded for irrigation. In our area it can be found by Gem Lake Dam and has been found north of Idaho Falls. Once it dies, it leaves behind a dry woody plant stalk that is difficult to pull and generally will not burn during spring ditch cleanup. The plant will produce hundreds of seeds and the seeds can last for years in the soil.

DEFENSE: Healthy lands mean fewer weeds. This plant will establish in disturbed sites and once it becomes established it is difficult to remove. Mechanical control by digging is effective as long as the top 3 inches of the root is removed. Hand pulling is difficult as the roots will extend down a few feet (depending upon the age of the weed). Herbicides of choice are Opensight, Milestone, Escort XP or Telar XP at the rate of one ounce per acre. Other products do not work on this plant, and may cause more harm than good if desirable plants are removed during control methods (like Roundup). This is a unique looking plant so consult with your local weed superintendent for proper identification.

