

## Giant Ragweed

### Overview

Unlike its shorter cousin common ragweed, which grows from 1–4 feet, giant ragweed can reach heights of up to 16 feet. Even a single plant can significantly reduce crop yield, and it's becoming increasingly herbicide-resistant.

### What you should know

- Giant ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*) is a member of the sunflower family.
- Giant ragweed can reach heights from 3 to more than 16 feet. It thrives in moist soils and full sunlight. It is a prolific seed producer and can readily spread if left undisturbed.
- Giant ragweed is one of the most competitive weeds in row crops. One giant ragweed plant per 10-foot row can reduce soybean yield by 52% and corn yield by 55%.
- Giant ragweed has rough and sometimes hairy reddish stems. It has separate male and female greenish-yellow flowers. Male flowers grow in columns and female flowers in clusters.
- Herbicides like glyphosate often provide only partial control, so giant ragweed is becoming increasingly hard to manage. A comprehensive weed-management strategy that includes monitoring of fields and removal of emerging seedlings is required.

### Action steps

1. **Till carefully:** Tillage controls emerged giant ragweed seedlings, but also stimulates germination. Unlike common ragweed, giant ragweed does not respond to night tillage.
2. **Herbicides may not be completely effective:** Some giant ragweed is resistant to glyphosate and other herbicides. Soil-applied herbicides may not be effective, because giant ragweed can emerge from 6 inches deep, below the active herbicide layer. Post-emergent herbicides have limited effect due to giant ragweed's growth rate. Precise timing of multiple modes of action may be required.

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W119.pdf>  
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/weeds/extension/giant-ragweed>

For more information, contact:



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*Giant ragweed can grow to a whopping 16 feet tall and significantly reduce crop yields.*



### 30-Second Summary

- Giant ragweed can reach heights of 3–16 feet, significantly reducing corn and soybean yields.
- Herbicides have limited effectiveness, due to giant ragweed's resistance, ability to emerge from below the active herbicide layer and rapid growth rate.

### NOTES:

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