



## **Common Groundsel Management in Strawberry Production**

### **Understanding the Weed:**

Common Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris* L.) is a branched winter or summer annual. It reproduces by seed from early spring through late fall. It can go through 3-4 generations in one year. Seed can disperse some distance by wind.

Research conducted by Doug Doohan at Ohio State University suggests that seed produced from spring through late summer is not dormant and germinates that growing season. Fall germinating groundsel produces seed that is dormant and can stay dormant until the next spring or for up to 3 years depending on micro-climatic conditions.



*Common Groundsel Seedling*



*Mature Common Groundsel Plant*

### **Important Management Concepts:**

- Site preparation is critical for the management of all weed species
  - o When bringing in a new field (fall round-up, summer fallow/cover crop, fall round-up, spring strawberry)
  - o Strawberry fields must be rotated with other crops and must be managed to reduce broadleaf weeds (ie. grains or a green cover)
  
- Prevent seed production – “1 year seeding, 7 years weeding”
  - o Hand weed small patches of weeds before they become a problem (remove plants from the field)
  - o Focus on managing groundsel in the fall and prevent the dormant seed production
  
- Manage land around fields (ie. headlands and field borders)
  - o Keep headlands and field borders mowed to prevent seed production

- Herbicides alone will not control common groundsel, but some of these chemical tools will help.
  - o Lontrel at renovation will control groundsel that has emerged at that time.
  - o Devrinol applied in the fall prior to mulching has shown some success in some fields. The success of this treatment can be very dependant on weather, soil conditions and previous spray history.
  - o Goal applied in late fall, pre mulch, does appear to delay groundsel development in the spring.
  - o Newer products have been tested throughout Canada, including Nova Scotia. It is hoped that these new product will be registered soon and will give producers better control options for common groundsel.
  
- Understand the herbicide you are applying – what weeds it will control, what conditions it works best in, the proper rate to apply it at, and the proper time to apply it.

**To source detailed information on pesticides and pesticide application, refer to the following guides:**

Strawberry Insect and Disease Management Guide

[http://www.agrapoint.ca/publications/Strawberry\\_Guide\\_v2006.pdf](http://www.agrapoint.ca/publications/Strawberry_Guide_v2006.pdf)

Strawberry IPM - Weed Management Guide (NBDFAFA)

<http://www.gnb.ca/0171/20/StrawberryIPM.pdf>

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