



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Teams from Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Ontario Take Top Honors in 2009 Collegiate Weed Science Contest**

*85 students from 11 universities compete for "Golden Hoe" award*

LAWRENCE, Kansas — October 12, 2009 — Can you name that leafy weed overrunning your perennial bed or crowding out the fall crops in your vegetable garden? If not, you can rest assured that the next generation of weed scientists will be poised to help.

Eighty-five students from 11 universities gathered on an Indiana research farm recently to test their mettle by identifying more than two dozen weeds on sight. They were competing for coveted "Golden Hoe" awards in the 2009 Collegiate Weed Science Contest, sponsored by the Northeastern and North Central Weed Science Societies.

In addition to identifying weeds, students were asked to determine the herbicides used on demonstration plots by examining the "symptoms" exhibited by treated plants. They took a written test on herbicide sprayer calibration and application technologies – and then were given just 15 minutes to set one up using the proper nozzle tips, pressure and speed. In another scenario familiar to agricultural extension educators and company field representatives, they were asked to diagnose and recommend effective solutions for pests, fertility issues and other common crop production problems.

"Our goal was to see how students responded to the kinds of real-world scenarios that weed scientists encounter each day," said Fritz Koppatschek of ABG Ag Services, a member of the Weed Science Society of America and contest coordinator. "The event gave them a great way to network with leading practitioners and to gauge whether they can effectively apply what they're learning on campus."

Participating schools included: Cornell University, Kansas State University, Michigan State University, Ohio State University, Penn State University, University of Guelph, University of Illinois, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska, University of Tennessee, and Virginia Tech.

Each regional society presented awards to both teams and individuals. The Northeast Weed Science Society awarded top honors in the graduate division to a team from Penn State that included Ryan Bates, Benjamin Crocket, Franklin Egan and Nelson Debarros. The University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, took top honors in the Northeast

undergraduate division with a team that included Andrew Reid, Blair Freeman and Scott Timmings. Individual winners included Angela Post of Cornell University (graduate division) and Andrew Reid of Guelph University (undergraduate division).

For the North Central Weed Science Society, a graduate team from Michigan State took top honors, including Kelly Barnett, Molly Buckham, Calvin Glaspie and Kate Withers. A team from the University of Illinois took top honors in the North Central undergraduate division, including Sean Breen, Caitlin Allen and Jared Roskamp. Individual winners included Michael Bell (graduate division) and Jared Roskamp (undergraduate division), both from the University of Illinois.

The two teams with the highest scores among all the universities competing won the Golden Hoe. Penn State took the honor for the graduate division, while the University of Guelph topped the undergraduate division.

The 2009 Collegiate Weed Science event was hosted by ABG AG Services on its farm near Sheridan, Indiana.

### ***About the Weed Science Society of America***

The Weed Science Society of America, a nonprofit professional society, was founded in 1956 to encourage and promote the development of knowledge concerning weeds and their impact on the environment. The Weed Science Society of America promotes research, education and extension outreach activities related to weeds, provides science-based information to the public and policy makers, fosters awareness of weeds and their impact on managed and natural ecosystems, and promotes cooperation among weed science organizations across the nation and around the world. For more information, visit [www.wssa.net](http://www.wssa.net).

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### **Sidebar:**

#### **A Rogue's Gallery of Weeds**

The 2009 Collegiate Weed Science Contest asked students to test their mettle by identifying 25 weed species at various stages of development – from seeds and sprouts to fully grown plants. The weeds included in the contest were:

1. annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*)
2. Asiatic dayflower (*Commelina communis*)
3. barnyardgrass (*Echinochloa crus-galli*)
4. buckhorn plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*)
5. common chickweed (*Stellaria media*)
6. common mallow (*Malva neglecta*)
7. common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)
8. common reed (*Phragmites australis*)
9. common waterhemp (*Amaranthus rudis*)
10. Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
11. fall panicum (*Panicum dichotomiflorum*)

12. field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*)
13. garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)
14. giant ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*)
15. green foxtail (*Setaria viridis*)
16. henbit (*Lamium amplexicaule*)
17. hemp dogbane (*Apocyanum cannabinum*)
18. hophornbeam copperleaf (*Acalypha ostryifolia*)
19. horseweed (*Conyza canadensis*)
20. Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*)
21. prickly sida (*Sida spinosa*)
22. quackgrass (*Agropyron repens*)
23. shepherd's-purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*)
24. wild carrot (*Daucus carota*)
25. yellow rocket (*Barbarea vulgaris arcuata*)

Think you can pass the same test? Visit [www.wssa.net](http://www.wssa.net) to try to match each weed with its photo.