



Fact Sheet
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Tropical Soda Apple (*Solanum viarum*)

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Tropical Soda Apple (TSA) is a common pasture weed here in Florida. It is easily identifiable but less easy to remove. However there are ways.

Biology: TSA is a perennial usually growing to be 3-6ft tall, and can be as wide as it is tall. The most distinguishing feature of TSA is that it grows ~0.4in thorns over the entire plant. Stems, leaves and flower stalks all grow these thorns. Leaves are 4-7in long and are lobed or “oak leaf” shaped. Small white flowers produce fruit that start green with white mottling but become yellow with maturity. These fruit are eaten by wildlife and cattle alike which allows spread with each fruit containing 200-400 seeds. The root system can be extensive and have buds that generate new shoots. This, in combination with its prickly nature makes mechanical removal of TSA difficult.



Control: For dense stands of TSA Milestone (aminopyralid) and GrazonNext HL (aminopyralid + 2,4D) provide excellent control. Apply Milestone at 5-7 oz/A and GrazonNext HL at 1.5-2.1 pt/A. It is recommended to add a non-ionic surfactant (0.25% volume to volume) to both herbicides and apply the solution in at least 20 gallons of water per acre.

For spot spraying use Milestone at 0.5-0.8 oz per 2.5 gal plus 0.25% non-ionic surfactant plus a color dye. Or use GrazonNext HL at 0.5-1% solution plus 0.2% non-ionic surfactant plus color dye. The dye is used to help avoid double spraying.

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A biological control has been released in the form of a beetle. *Gratiana boliviana* is a small beetle that feeds on the leaf tissue of TSA. The beetle does a good job damaging the plant, making it weaker and produce less fruit. However this bio control will not completely eradicate TSA from your pasture. While the beetle has been released state-wide ask your local extension agent for specifics on availability.



Gratiana boliviana, or TSA Beetle



Leaf damage caused by *Gratiana boliviana*

TSA can be spread very easily. Keep this in mind if you acquire new cattle. TSA seed can remain viable in digestive tracts for 6 days. If you choose to manually pull up TSA be sure to dispose of the plant immediately or place it in an area animals can't get to. The fruit could contain viable seeds that birds, wildlife, or livestock will pick at specifically.



Fruit from Tropical Soda Apple



A healthy and mature TSA plant

There is a different species that looks very similar to TSA, but has cherry red fruit. It's called *Solanum capsicoides* or Red Soda Apple. Red Soda Apple is not nearly as common but is controlled in the same manner.

For more information on Tropical Soda Apple and its control please visit this document: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw097>



For more information on TSA scan here



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