Tips for professional ragweed control:

Chemical control is limited by legal restrictions on the use of herbicides which can have a negative impact on the environment if misused. Good control can be achieved by using some soil applied herbicides in the spring and by using contact herbicides on the early growth stages of ragweed. Refer to the product labels to determine their efficacy. Common ragweed will regrow after having been cut, and cutting it a second time will not be effective because the new branches grow very close to the ground. Therefore a combination of cutting and herbicide application may be the most effective control in severely infested areas.

Do not treat single plant stands with herbicides – pull it out by hand and completely destroy the plants.

Ragweed can easily be confused with

**Lamb’s quarters** *Chenopodium album* L.
Leaves rhombic-ovate or goosefoot shaped near the base; irregularly cut; covered on the under side with a mealy secretion.

**Rough pigweed** *Amaranthus retroflexus* L.
Leaves long ovate, dull green, rough hairy, with long petioles and prominent ribs and veins.

**Common mugwort** *Artemisia vulgaris* L.
Leaves are smooth and dark green above but covered with fine white wool beneath.

Internet links:

- www.acw.admin.ch
- www.ahaswiss.ch
- www.ambrosia.ch (May 2008)
- www.ambroisie.info
- www.cps-skew.ch
- www.daisie.se
- www.meteosuisse.ch
- www.polleninfo.ch
- www.plants.usda.gov
- www.umwelt-schweiz.ch
- www.nationalstrassen.ch
**Ragweed**

Ragweed related allergies occur typically in August and September after the pollination of common grasses. The pollen of common ragweed affects human health, causing: rhino-conjunctivitis, asthma and, more rarely, contact dermatitis or urticaria. 10 to 15% of the population are potentially allergic; ¼ will additionally suffer from severe asthma.

**Economical Consequences**

Ragweed pollen increase allergies. Allergic rhinitis affects vigilance and cognitive functioning and leads to a lower worker productivity. In Switzerland, an allergic person may need an estimated CHF 100.- per year (an asthmatic CHF 1000.-) for drugs and consultations.

**A problem for the biodiversity**

Ragweed establishes easily in areas disturbed by human activities were it multiplies rapidly. It is considered an invasive species in Europe, although it is not an extremely competitive species.

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**Aim:** Destroy ragweed before the seeds mature to prevent further multiplication.

**Control Strategy**

Uproot and destroy plants before pollen and seed production! Everybody can help to reduce ragweed populations effectively:

- 1 – 20 plants found: pull the plants, incl. roots, and dispose of in the household waste – **do not compost flowering plants.**
- > 20 plants found: control measures by specialists
- Check the site for ragweed in the following years.

**In all cases:** immediately inform the landowner and the local authorities.

**Concerted Action**

Switzerland and other European regions are beginning to be invaded. Concerted low cost control strategies against ragweed, supported by the general public, professionals and authorities can effectively reduce further spread.

**Vegetation Period:**

Always wear gloves to hand pull ragweed before flowering (April-July) and also wear a fine dust mask once ragweed is flowering (August-November)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetation Period</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attention to pollen</td>
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<td>Ripe seeds fall straight to the ground.</td>
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**Dispersal by human activities:**

Seeds are found in grain feed, bird feed, bailed hay and straw, excavation materials, construction equipment, agricultural machinery, mud on vehicles.

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**Ambrosia artemisifolia L.**

Ragweed – native to North America – is an herbaceous summer annual. The height of a matured plant depends on soil type, light, moisture etc and ranges from ~15-180 cm. The plant is monoecious. Ragweed has deep, branching roots. The stem is erect, slightly reddish and hairy, branching freely. Leaves are opposite up to weed growth stage 16 (BBCH); later on they are alternate, 5-15 cm long, deep green above, paler beneath, twice pennatifid, giving the plant an open feathery appearance. The top-situated male inflorescence contain ~6-20 small greenish flowers. Female flowers in the axils form achene-like ovoid fruits with a beaked crown, surrounded by 4-6 spiny points. Ragweed only rarely develop spatulate or lanceolate leafs; also only female flowers on one plant are rarely found.

Ragweed propagates with seeds only and does not survive frost.