

Vaseygrass: Encroaching problem in Northeast Alabama Hayfields

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Introduction

Vaseygrass is a warm season perennial grass that is a native of South America. It is a drought tolerant grass that reproduces mainly by seed. Forage quality and palatability is low after the immature growth stage. In recent years, it has encroached on hayfields in North Alabama. Some control options are available for warm season grasses such as bermudagrass and bahiagrass. Control options for vaseygrass in tall fescue or other cool season grasses is lacking. To address farmers concerns, a demonstration plot was established to investigate some post emergent herbicide control options for vaseygrass.



Vaseygrass encroaching on this tall fescue hayfield.

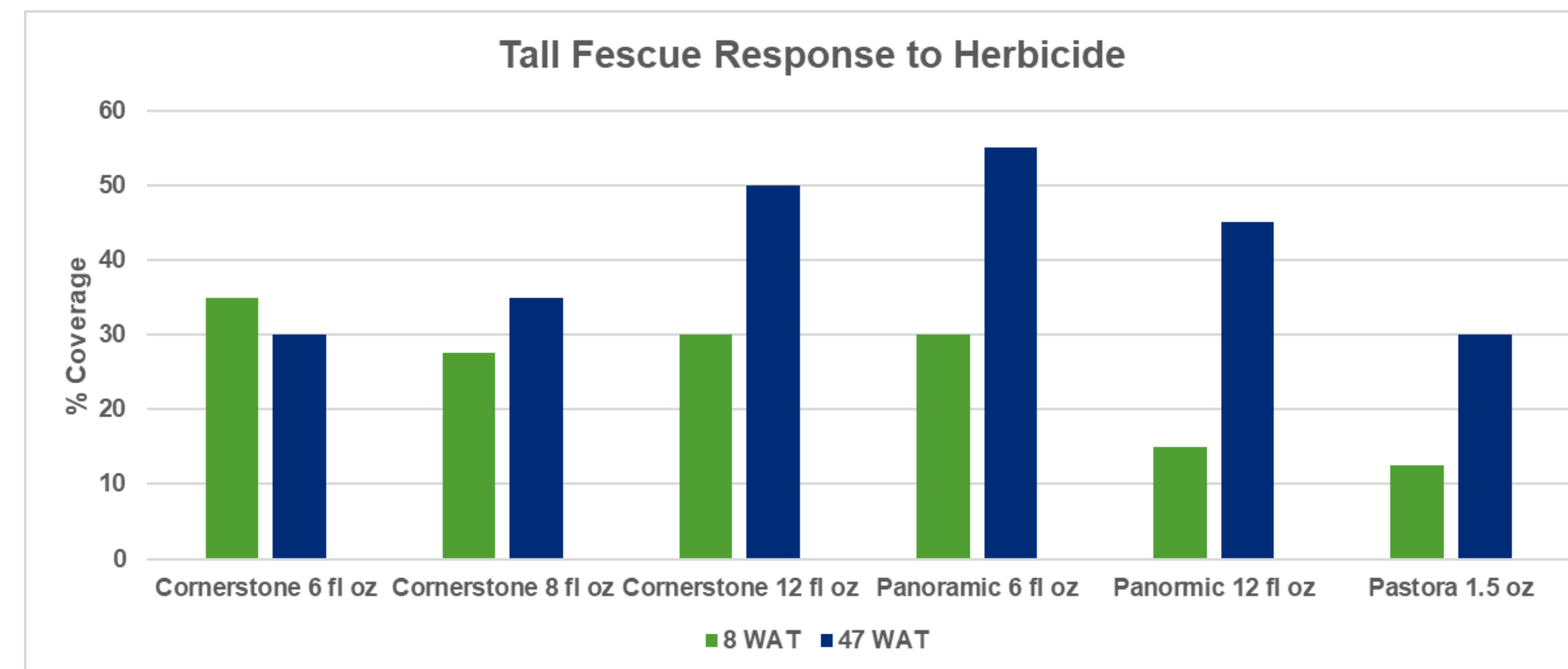
Materials and Methods

The demonstration was established on Sand Mountain near Dutton, AL. Vaseygrass averaged 3.5' height and nearly 100% ground coverage at the time of treatment on August 24, 2022. Treatments included:

- Cornerstone Plus (41% glyphosate/3 lb ae per gal)
 - 6 fl oz per acre
 - 8 fl oz per acre
 - 12 fl oz per acre
- Panoramic (imazapic)
 - 6 fl oz per acre
 - 12 fl oz per acre
- Pastora (nicosulfuron/metsulfuron)
 - 1.5 oz per acre

Herbicide treatments applied at 15 gallons per acre using a CO₂ pressurized backpack sprayer. There was two replications for each treatment. Visual assessments for tall fescue and vaseygrass were taken on October 20, 2022 (8 WAT*) and July 20, 2023 (47 WAT).

*WAT = weeks after treatment



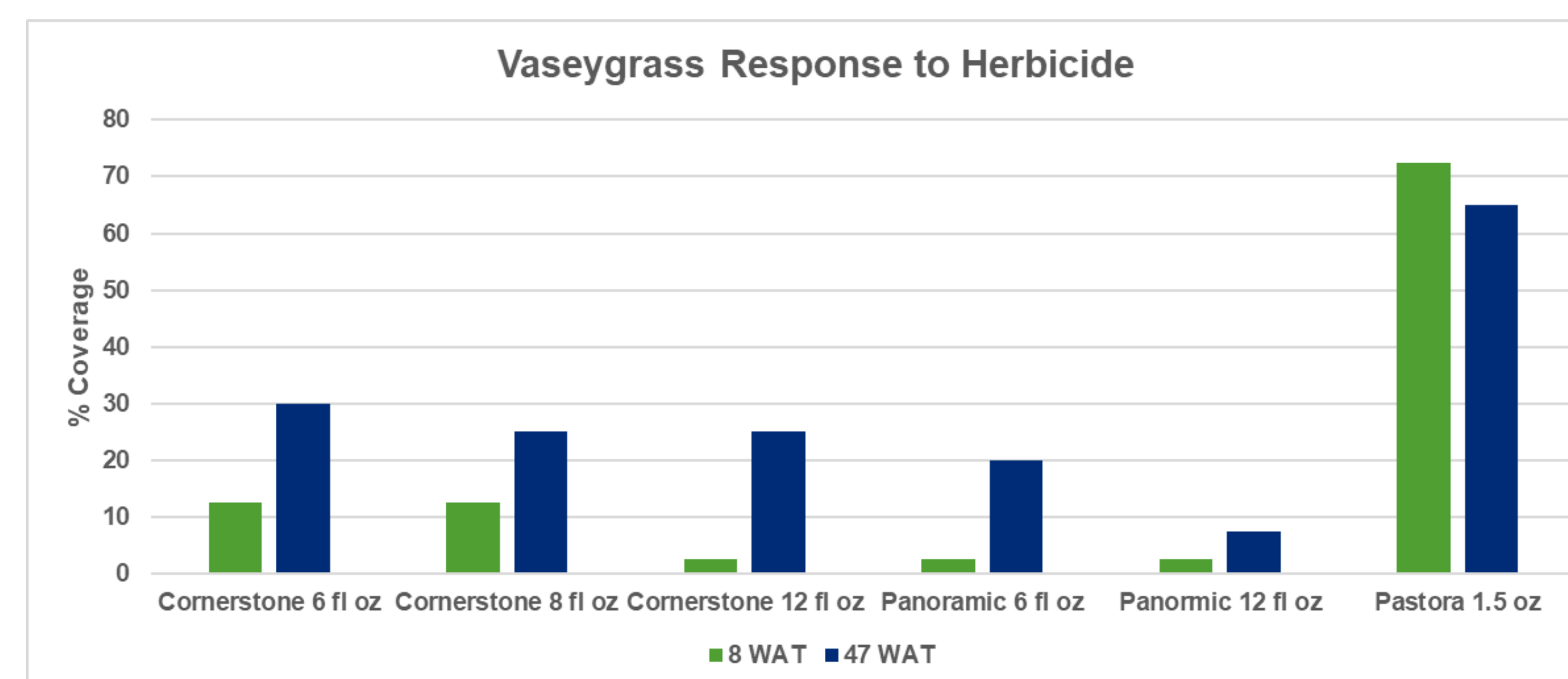
Cornerstone Plus
12 fl oz/A
July 2023



Panoramic
6 fl oz/A
July 2023



Panoramic
12 fl oz/A
July 2023



Results

- At 8 WAT, all treatments except Pastora reduced vaseygrass below 15% coverage.
- Tall fescue was present at greater than 25% with all rates of Cornerstone Plus and 6 fl oz/A Panoramic.
- At 47 WAT, tall fescue increased to 30% or greater in all plots.
- Although vaseygrass coverage increased over time, 12 fl oz/A Cornerstone Plus and 6 and 12 fl oz/A Panoramic were the most effective treatments that controlled vaseygrass (<22%) and promoted an increase in tall fescue (>42%).

Conclusion

- Control options are minimal for controlling vaseygrass in a cool season forage system such as tall fescue, therefore, more work is warranted in this area of weed control.
- This data suggests that summer applications of selected herbicide applied POST may effectively suppress vaseygrass while minimizing injury to tall fescue while in a semi-dormant state.
- In this demonstration, the two rates of Panoramic and 12 fl oz/A Cornerstone Plus were the best treatments to control vaseygrass while causing minimal injury to tall fescue.



This area demonstrates the invasive nature of vaseygrass.

Acknowledgements

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