

This column features questions from readers submitted via the Web site. To submit a question to Small Acre Sam, visit BarnyardsandBackyards.com. If your question is featured, you will receive a free one-year subscription to *Barnyards & Backyards!*



# ask Sam

## question

**Dear Sam,**

Is there anything I can do prepare to reduce grasshopper infestation on my property next summer?

— Scott, Sheridan

ANSWER

**Scott:**

Mark your calendar to start looking for grasshoppers hatching from mid-May through late June. Those hefty grasshoppers that ate your garden and pasture this summer didn't spontaneously generate – they started out about the size of uncooked rice with six legs and antennae in the spring. Grasshoppers are much easier to kill when they are little than when they are adults. The major pest grasshopper species favor weedy roadsides, field borders, alleyways, and vacant lots as habitat for depositing eggs. Check those areas first on a weekly basis.

Organize your neighbors. Grasshoppers are quite mobile, and, if you treat your property and your neighbors don't, your efforts may prove futile. If you and the neighbors cooperate, a larger area can be treated. Economy of scale may kick in and make options such as a spray plane for aerial application viable.

Learn about control options. What products are labeled for use? What are the restrictions, approximate costs, and how are they applied? A good starting point is with your local weed and pest control district office. They can help determine which products to use, what the restrictions are, costs, and how to apply. If you decide 10,000 turkeys or any other control method is the answer to your problem, figure out where you can procure it this winter and not wait until the grasshoppers are flying! Consider getting a pesticide applicators license if you decide to do it yourself with a restricted-use pesticide. For information about training and schedules, see [www.uwyo.edu/plants/wyopest/trainingmaterial.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/plants/wyopest/trainingmaterial.html). You will learn a lot, and, even if you choose an organic or non-restricted-use product, it will still need to be applied correctly at the proper rate to work and not waste money.

Here are links to other grasshopper information:

<http://ces.uwyo.edu/Entomology.asp>

[www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/info.asp?p=10463](http://www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/info.asp?p=10463)

Several useful publications on grasshopper identification and control are available from the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service. Go to [www.uwyo.edu/cessupport/agpubs/Search\\_Start.asp](http://www.uwyo.edu/cessupport/agpubs/Search_Start.asp) and instructions for locating publications (typing in the word "Grasshopper" as a keyword will pull up most of the applicable publications).

— Sam

