



Field Sandbur

O & T Guide W-7

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Field sandbur, *Cenchrus spinifex*, is a native annual grass that produces numerous green to straw-colored spiny burs at maturity. The burs are dispersed when they cling to animals, people, clothing, or equipment. They are very sharp and can be dangerous to grazing animals, pets, people, and tires. Field sandbur is also known as sandbur, burgrass, spiny sandbur, and *Cenchrus incertus*.

The stems may be erect or spreading, are often bent near the base, and are highly branched. They grow from 6 in. to 1.5 ft. tall and appear flat in cross-section. The plant's leaves are flat (folded when budding), 1.5-12 in. long and 0.10-0.25 in. wide, usually with a raised midvein, and few to no hairs. The base of each leaf forms a sheath that extends down the stem, and the point where the leaf base joins the sheath is often lighter in color and hairy.



Field sandbur produces numerous small, spiny burs that are green to straw-colored. They are found at the ends of flowering stems in groups that are 0.8-2.0 in. long and contain 10-30 burs; each bur is about 0.10-0.25 inches in diameter with 8-40 sharp, spiny bracts. The plant has a shallow and fibrous root system that emerges from the plant base; some lower stem nodes may also develop roots. It reproduces through seed only.





Management:

- Establishment and management of desirable vegetation is very effective because field sandbur is a poor competitor
- Repeated cultivation before burs form can be effective
- Mowing is NOT effective
- Pre-emergent herbicides are effective

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