

Evaluation of Hair Fescue (*Festuca filiformis*) Management in Wild Blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium* Ait.) using Casoron® G4

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Introduction

Hair fescue (*festuca filiformis*) is currently the pest of greatest concern for the wild blueberry (wbb) industry. This economically destructive weed has increased in field frequency from 7% in 2001 to 68% in 2019.

Afflicted fields see an average uniformity of 25%.

Hair fescue can rapidly spread as a result of:

- Single tufts can produce up to 3000 seeds
- Seeds readily break from the panicle
- The wbb production cycle sees multiple passes of agricultural equipment
- Healthy fescues will have multiple seed drops per year
- Kerb™ SC is the only widely employed herbicide though it is expensive and difficult to attain



Fig. 1: Blueberry field showing significant hair fescue infestation

Objectives

Assess the potential of dichlobenil (Casoron® G4) for managing hair fescue

Compare the potential of both spot and broadcast applied Casoron® G4

Compare the effectiveness of three different application rates of Casoron® G4

Make a recommendation for hair fescue treatment in wild blueberries

Methods

Two different trials were carried out

1. Effect of application method
2. Effect of application rate

The effect of application method trial had four levels and was replicated five times in three separate fields

1. Spot applied Casoron® G4 (Backpack)
2. Broadcast applied Casoron® G4 (Spinner)
3. Broadcast Kerb™ SC – Industry Standard
4. Negative Control

The effect of application rate trial had five levels and was replicated five times in three separate fields

1. Casoron® G4 Low Rate – 110 kg ha⁻¹
2. Casoron® G4 Medium Rate – 142.5 kg ha⁻¹
3. Casoron® G4 High Rate – 175 kg ha⁻¹
4. Broadcast Kerb™ SC – Industry Standard
5. Negative Control

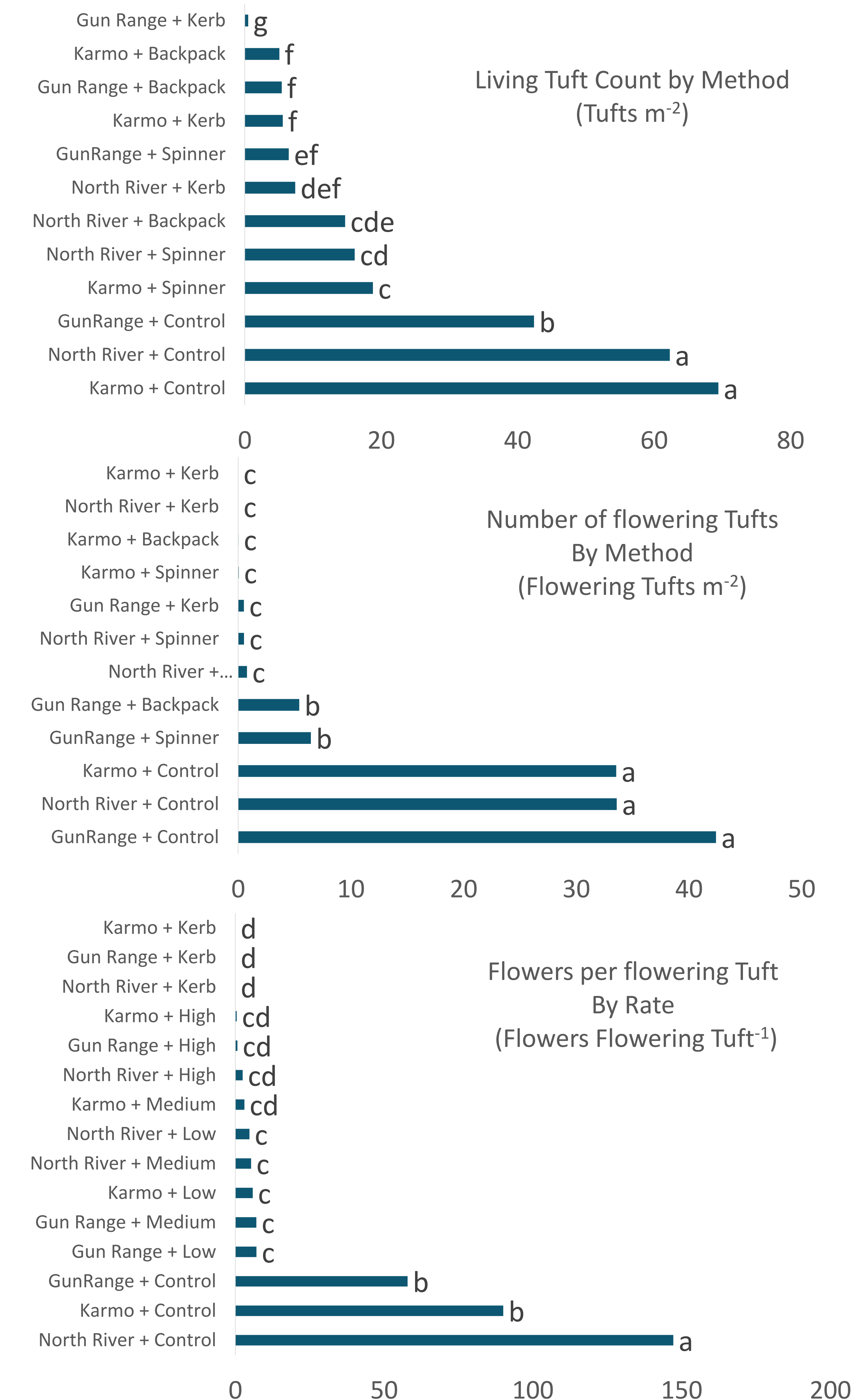


Fig. 2: Plot setup following mowing for application rate trial

The following responses were analyzed

- Total living tuft count
- Total flowering tuft count
- Seed heads per flowering tuft

Highlights from Results



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