

# A MESSAGE FROM THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

## Ragwort - your help is needed again!

A massive 'thank you' once again to all those who supported the BHS ragwort survey in association with Defra last year. Our final response number was 13,963 – a huge achievement – but we couldn't have done it without those who helped publicise the survey.

Following the survey's conclusions and analysis, Defra hosted a stakeholder summit in November on how to take this work forward. One of the plans was to deliver a [ragwort toolkit](#) to clarify all that is ragwort-related – from what it looks like, where it is and isn't a problem for horses, how to dispose of it, and other common questions. The need for this type of straightforward help and clarification was highly evident from the survey and we're really pleased with the feedback we've had so far for the online version. A downloadable pdf should also be available later this summer and the aim is to have hard copies available after this.

However, another part of our work on ragwort awareness this year launches on Tuesday 7 July 2015 to coincide with the current growing season. We're asking you and your followers and supporters to get involved once again by showing us the ragwort you're removing **from high-risk areas (high-risk is within 50 metres of land used for grazing or forage production – there's no obligation to remove ragwort further away)**. We know this is a prime time for diligent owners to be out clearing the weed from near their pasture, so let's all continue to spread the word about safe, effective removal where it's needed.

From Tuesday, we'll be asking people to share pictures of bagged/removed ragwort on Facebook and Twitter using the hashtag **#IvePulled!** Full guidance on how to safely and effectively pull ragwort is available within the toolkit (which also outlines other options for removal – we'll happily see pictures of any recommended method!) but the main points to remember for best practice of course are:

- Long sleeves and gloves to avoid skin contact
- Holding plants aloft to show off efforts can spread the seed and counteract good work, so why not try a picture of the ragwort bagged up ready for disposal, or an action shot of its removal?

Please do get involved once again by asking your users to post their pics with **#IvePulled**, and linking to the toolkit wherever possible. We're so grateful for the support you've shown – it's vital for helping to spread the word, not the seed!

Below are some sample tweets and Facebook posts you could use to invite people to get involved.

*#IvePulled – have you? If you've got ragwort within 50 metres of grazing/forage land, get it out! See why & how at [www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit](http://www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit)*

*Ragwort a risk near your grazing? If it's within 50 metres, get the gloves out and tweet @britishhorse before-and-after pics with #IvePulled*

*Pulled anything this weekend? Tweet @britishhorse pics of ragwort removed from high-risk areas using #IvePulled [www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit](http://www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit)*

*It's summer – so the gloves are on! Get ragwort out of high-risk areas and make next year easier. See [www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit](http://www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit) for how to remove it effectively and safely #IvePulled*

*Worried about safety when removing ragwort from high-risk areas? Check out the BHS's toolkit at [www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit](http://www.bhs.org.uk/ragworttoolkit)*