

*Helminthotheca echioides* (L.) Holub (Asteraceae)

**General shape:** Narrowly obovate with a slender stalk.

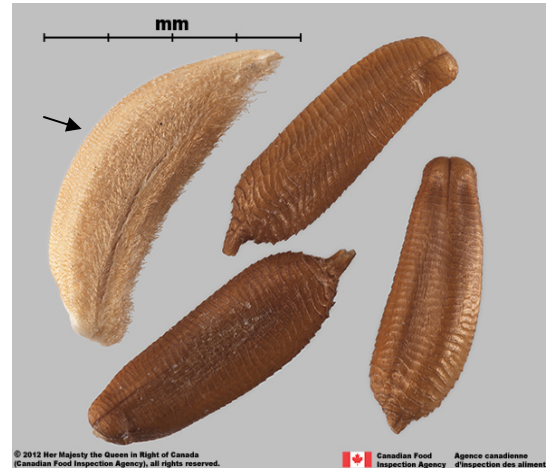
**Normal size:**  
2.5-3.5 mm L x 0.4-1.0 mm W x 0.8 mm D

**Color:** Yellowish brown to dark brown.

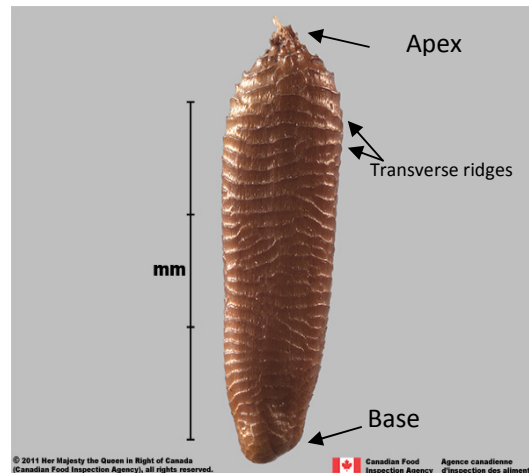
**Texture:** Glossy with irregular, transverse ridges.

**Distinguishing features:** Broadest near the rounded apex, gradually tapers to a rounded base. Sometimes curved. Transverse ridges are narrow and crowded at the base and become wider and deeper near the apex. Outer seeds may be enclosed in a hairy bract.

**Embryo:** Embryo with well-developed cotyledons and a broad stalk having a truncate top, no endosperm.



*Helminthotheca echioides* achenes with one enclosed in a hairy bract (arrow)



*Helminthotheca echioides* achene

Authored by Susan Putz  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canada

Images by Jo Jones