

Control Woody Plants on Rangeland

Rachael Boyle
Phillips-Rooks District Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Late summer and fall can be an excellent time to treat unwanted stands of woody plants. Scattered stands of individual trees should either be treated individually using the basal bark method (for labeled plants less than 4-6 inches in diameter) or the cut stump treatment method. The basal bark and cut stump treatments will not be effective if the plants cannot be treated down to the soil line. Avoid conditions where water (or snow later in the season) prevents spraying to the ground line.

Basal bark application method - Producers can treat smaller diameter susceptible woody plants individually this fall by spraying the basal stem parts with triclopyr plus diesel fuel. The lower 12-15 inches of the stems or trunks of susceptible small trees should be thoroughly wetted on all sides with a triclopyr-diesel mixture. Triclopyr goes by the tradenames Remedy Ultra and Pathfinder II. Remedy Ultra is a 4 lb/gallon product. The labeled recommendations for Remedy Ultra are 20-30% solution in diesel. Pathfinder II is a ready-to-use product and does not have to be mixed with diesel. PastureGard HL is a premix of triclopyr and fluroxypyr, and can be applied as a basal bark or cut-stump treatment as a 25% solution in diesel. Crossbow, a mixture of triclopyr and 2,4-D, can also provide control of certain woody plants as a 4% solution in diesel. Milestone, with the active ingredient aminopyralid, is effective on black and common honeylocust. Mix Milestone 5% v/v with a compatible basal oil; e.g. Dyne-Amic from Helena Chemical. Before selecting a basal oil, do a jar test by mixing Milestone and basal oil to determine compatibility.

Cut-stump method - If the woody plant is greater than 6 inches in diameter, the best method is to cut it off at ground level, treat the cut surface with triclopyr and diesel fuel within 30-60 minutes, before the sap seals over the exposed area, spray the cambium and light-colored sapwood to insure translocation of the herbicide, and treat any exposed trunk or exposed roots.

The stump of ash, cottonwood, elm, oaks, persimmon, willow, and Russian olive can be treated with a 1:1 ratio of dicamba (Clarity, Sterling Blue) in water instead of triclopyr if desired. The stumps of Eastern red cedar do not need to be treated since, unlike many woody plants, this species does not root sprout. Simply cutting Eastern red cedar below the lowest green branch will kill it. Common trees in Kansas that re-sprout after cutting include: ash, cottonwood, elm, oaks, osage orange (hedge), persimmon, black and common honey locust, saltcedar, and Russian olive. In sprouting species, new shoots arise from dormant buds at or below the ground often resulting in a multi-stemmed clump.

Common honeylocust can re-sprout from a wide diameter area around the main plant because of root suckers. One option is to make a basal bark treatment with triclopyr-containing products to kill the entire plant in the fall. Then the main plant can be cut down in subsequent years once the tree is dead. Cut-stump applications of Milestone as a 10% solution in water has been more effective than triclopyr on common honeylocust.

Tordon RTU and Pathway can be used on cut surfaces in noncropland areas such as fence rows, roadsides, and rights-of-way. However, Tordon RTU, and Pathway are not labeled for use on range and pasture. Glyphosate labels vary on what sites are labeled for cut-stump application on rangeland. Roundup PowerMAX can be applied on any terrestrial site. Roundup ULTRA can only be applied as a cut-stump treatment on non-cropland. Be sure to check the label as rangeland is sometimes included as a site under non-cropland on some glyphosate labels.

Check labels for restrictions for use prior to hay harvesting, removal of animals before slaughter, and for use around lactating dairy animals.

For more information, please contact the local K-State Research and Extension Office.
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.