



Ada County Pest of the Month

A quick guide to identifying and controlling invasive plants and animals found in the county



Quick Facts



- Name: Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)
- Found: In rangelands and pastures and along roadsides and riparian areas in Ada County
- Briefly: Leafy spurge is a caustic noxious weed. It emits a milky sap that can be an irritant to humans and livestock. The perennial plant grows up to 2.5 feet tall and its roots can extend 20 feet into the underlying soil. The plant reproduces by this extensive root system and by seeds which can live up to 8 years in the seedbed.

Identification

The Leafy spurge plant has many stems growing from its extensive root system. By summer these stems are tipped with a pair of showy, yellowish-green, heart-shaped bracts that enclose small flower clusters. The bracts are petal-like structures that look like a rosette. Further down the stem grows lance-shaped leaves arranged in a whorled pattern. (The term “whorled” can best be defined as something arranged like spokes on a wheel.) The plant’s seeds grow in a pod which is attached by a yellowish appendage between the plant’s bracts. When the seeds ripen, the pod explodes and can throw the seeds up to 15 feet from the parent plant.



Leafy spurge’s most identifying feature is a caustic milky sap that exudes from the plant’s stem when broken. To humans, this sap can cause extreme skin irritation (including blistering) and possibly blindness if it gets near the eyes. To livestock this plant can be toxic.

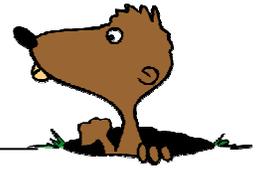
How To Control



Manual control is ineffective on Leafy spurge because of the plant’s extensive root system; mowing or cutting the plant is ineffective since the plant can readily grow back. **DO NOT** hand-pull Leafy spurge; if you do, use protective gloves to avoid the caustic sap it secretes when the plant stem is broken.

Chemical application is the best way to control Leafy spurge from your property. A variety of herbicides work to control Leafy spurge. See the next page for more information.

Control...Continued



To best control Leafy spurge, look for herbicides that contain the following active ingredients and apply the chemical in the appropriate timeline

Note: Chemical control of any weed can be difficult and confusing. If you are not experienced in chemical control or do not understand the product label, you should consult a licensed applicator to assist you. Inappropriate application can kill desirable vegetation, and may violate federal law.

Impazapic	July through September
Picloram + 2, 4-D	June through November
Picloram	June through November
Glyphosate	June through September
Dicamba	April through July
2, 4-D Ester	March through June

After applying herbicides, continue to control Leafy spurge by planting competitive grasses or desirable perennial vegetation as a form of cultural control against the noxious weed.



For questions or concerns, please contact us:

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