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COMMON MULLEIN MANAGEMENT TIPS

Common mullein, a member of the Figwort family, is a biennial with a deep, fibrous taproot. The leaves are light green, densely woolly and alternate along the stem. The yellow flowers are five-lobed and are arranged on a long terminal spike. Mature plants usually grow three to six feet tall. Reproduction is by seed only. Common mullein is commonly found along river bottoms, roadsides, waste areas, pastures and fence lines, especially where there are gravelly soils. Common mullein can form dense and persistent stands and is not grazed by livestock because of its wooliness.



Management efforts should focus on reducing/eliminating seed production. The area should be monitored for new growth until the seed bank is depleted and any new plants that emerge from seeds should be controlled appropriately.

Effective control measures for the management of common mullein include:

1. **Mechanical (hand pulling, digging & mowing):** Hand pulling, digging or mowing can provide control of small infestations of common mullein. Sever the root below the soil surface and bag any flowers or seeds.
2. **Herbicide: Always follow directions on the label. The label is the law!** Calibrate your equipment to ensure that you are adding the proper amount of herbicide to your tank. The following herbicides are commonly used to control common mullein. **DO NOT use these herbicides on lawns, turf or ornamental sites - read the label.** *For the most effective control, apply herbicides in the rosette stage up to the early bolting stage.*

Mixing rates in small backpack or hand sprayers are as follows:

*Opensight:	1/2 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water (rosette stage).
*Chaparral:	1/2 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water (rosette stage).
Milestone:	1.5 teaspoons herbicide to 1 gallon of water (rosette stage).
*Escort XP:	1/5 – 1/2 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
*Telar XP:	1/5 – 1/2 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
*Cimarron Plus:	1/4 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.

Rates in large sprayers are as follows:

*Opensight:	2.5 oz herbicide per acre (rosette stage).
*Chaparral:	2.5 oz herbicide per acre (rosette stage).
Milestone:	7 oz herbicide per acre (rosette stage).
*Escort XP:	1 - 2 oz herbicide per acre.
*Telar XP:	1 – 2.6 oz herbicide per acre.
Cimarron Plus:	.625 – 1.25 oz herbicide per acre.

NOTE: Adding a surfactant to your tank mix may enhance the performance of your herbicide and is required for certain herbicides (read the label). Add 0.5 - 1 oz per gallon of water for backpack sprayers or 1 – 2 pints per 100 gallons for large sprayers.

*** denotes that a surfactant is required for the herbicide to be effective**

3. **Cultural (tilling & revegetation):** Tillage can control existing plants but soil disturbance will stimulate recruitment. Planting and maintaining desirable, competitive species will help slow the spread of common mullein.
4. **Integrated management:** Management of common mullein is more effective when more than one strategy is used.