

Fall Brush and Weed Control

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As a general rule of thumb, brush is most susceptible to foliar applied herbicides just after the full leaf stage in the spring. Herbicides applied at that time are absorbed and trans located to the site of action. There are some methods of chemical application that are effective in the fall and winter. Before I explain those methods, there are a couple of things we should review pertaining to chemical control.

Chemical Control: All chemicals must be applied according to the directions on the label. Be sure to read all label information including rate, timing and safety issues. Most woody plants are susceptible to herbicides when applied properly. Chemicals that are trans located to, or taken up by, the roots are preferred. After heavy stands are reduced to a manageable level, spot treatment rather than broadcast treatment is best. The application of herbicides can be done by one of several methods. Be sure the method of application is approved on the herbicide label.

Basal Bark: Some species can be controlled by applying a mixture of diesel and herbicide to the lower 18 to 24 inches of the trunk. Wetting the bark to run off at the soil line is important to reduce root collar sprouts. Be sure to apply mixture all the way around the trunk.

Cut Stump: Cutting trees and brush at or near ground level will result in resprouting with many species, except red cedar. Treating the cut surface with a herbicide after cutting will usually prevent regrowth. Treatment should be applied soon after cutting. Red cedars do not require stump treatment when cut below the lowest limb.

Pellets or Granules: Spot treatments applied by hand or aerial application of pellet or granular herbicides are effective when used properly. The herbicide is leached into the soil by rainfall and then taken up by the plants. Don't apply on frozen or water saturated soils. Soils of limestone or shale origin may contain enough clay that it will reduce effectiveness of these materials.

Soil Applied Liquids: Application and action is similar to pellets and granules except that they are for spot treatment only. They appear to work much better than pellets or granules on heavier clay soils. Once again, don't apply on frozen or water saturated soils.

Weed control is usually most effective in the spring when the plants are young and actively growing. There are some that can be controlled with fall chemical application. Some chemicals are labeled for use on broadleaf weeds in the fall. Winter annual weeds are best controlled with fall applications.

Some noxious weeds can also be controlled with fall chemical applications if adequate moisture is present to promote growth. They include: Musk Thistle, Sericea Lespedeza, and Field Bindweed.

Recommendations for Brush and weed control can be found in the 2013 Chemical Weed Control book found on the ksre.ksu.edu site and in the Rangeland and Pasture Brush & Weed Control information in the Agriculture section on the butler.ksu.edu site.

All chemicals are subject to label statements. Those who apply chemicals are responsible for correct use. Always read the label before purchase and/or use. Be sure you know how to apply, rate to apply, time of year to apply and use restrictions. The User is Responsible.