

Mesquite spraying season is now in full swing. Many parts of West Texas have received rainfall and growing conditions are favorable; this will improve your success at controlling many noxious brush species.

Mesquite trees less than 6 feet tall may be sprayed by hand using the Brush Busters leaf spray method. The herbicide spray mix consists of 0.5 percent triclopyr, 0.5 percent clopyralid, 0.25 percent non-ionic surfactant, and 0.25 percent marking dye added to a given volume of water. For example, to fill a 100 gallon spray tank, you would add a half gallon (64 oz.) each of triclopyr and clopyralid plus one quart each of surfactant and dye to the water. An alternative is Sendero® herbicide. The recommended rate for mesquite individual plant treatment (IPT) is 1 percent. Surfactant and dye are added at the same rates as above.

Backpack sprayers are usually the most efficient in dense mesquite, while ATV sprayers become more efficient for large acreages. The spray nozzle should deliver a coarse droplet, Conejet® 5500-X6 or -X8, or similar is recommended. Wet all the foliage of each mesquite plant until the leaves are almost to the point of dripping. Soil temperature, growing conditions, and leaf condition are all paramount to a successful spray job. The IPT spray season in West Texas should last through September provided the key points below apply to your rangeland.

Key points to remember:

- Minimum soil temperature of 75°F at a depth of 12 inches.
- Dark green leaf color, mostly yellow (faded) flowers, and elongated beans.
- At least 75 percent leaf canopy that is healthy with no insect, hail, or frost damage.
- Always read and follow pesticide label directions.

Key things to avoid:

- Do not spray when leaves are wet.
- Moisture from rainfall may result in new, bright green leaf growth; avoid spraying until leaves turn dark green.
- Do not spray when flowers are white or when beans are short and curled; wait until beans are long and straight.

Remember that brush control is a long-term strategy. Do not disturb the sprayed trees for two growing seasons as this may cause re-sprouting. Pockets of new growth on treated plants next season does not mean that the trees will survive. The new growth may wither and die. Contact your local AgriLife Extension agent for further details and recommendations. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Texas AgriLife Extension or Texas AgriLife Research is implied.

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