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YELLOW STARHISTLE MANAGEMENT TIPS

Yellow starthistle, a member of the Sunflower family, is an annual forb with a deep taproot. Straw-colored spines up to two inches long surround the base of the yellow flower. Yellow starthistle reproduces only by seed. **Seed longevity is six to ten years.** Mature plants usually grow two to three feet tall. Yellow starthistle is typically found in rangeland, pastures, agricultural areas and along rights-of-way. The plant is toxic to horses, causing the neurological disorder “chewing disease” which can be fatal. The sharp spines inhibit recreational activities and can be damaging to the eyes of animals.



Management efforts must be planned for many consecutive years, as new plants may emerge from seeds. Prevention is the number one management strategy for this plant. Yellow starthistle is not present in Montana and control is a high priority if found. If you think you have found this plant, please contact your local county Weed District.

Effective control measures for the management of yellow starthistle include:

- 1. Mechanical (hand pulling & digging):** These methods are strongly recommended when there are small infestations, and are most effective from when the plant has bolted through the early flowering stage. It is critical to pull the plants before they produce viable seed. Remove as much of the root as possible and place flowering plants in bags to prevent seed dispersal. Wear gloves when hand pulling or digging plants.
- 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 yellow starthistle. **Do NOT use these herbicides in lawns, turf or ornamental settings – read the label.** *For the most effective control, apply herbicides in late spring/early summer after the plants have fully emerged, but when they are still actively growing and prior to the bud stage.*

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

Curtail:	2 oz herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
Milestone:	2/3 – 1 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
GrazonNext HL:	1 oz herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
*Opensight:	1/2 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
*Chaparral:	1/2 teaspoon herbicide to 1 gallon of water.
DuraCor:	0.5 oz herbicide to 1 gallon of water.

Rates in large sprayers are as follows:

Curtail:	2 quarts herbicide per acre.
Milestone:	3 - 5 oz herbicide per acre.
GrazonNext HL:	1 quart herbicide per acre.
*Opensight:	2 – 2.5 oz herbicide per acre.
*Chaparral:	2 -2.5 oz herbicide per acre.
DuraCor:	12 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 (revegetation):** Yellow starthistle is not very tolerant of shade. Planting desirable species to compete with yellow starthistle in susceptible areas, such as areas that have been disturbed from construction, is highly recommended.
- 4. Integrated management:** Management of yellow starthistle is more effective when more than one strategy is used.