

Controlling eastern redcedar

Many methods have been explored or used to control eastern redcedar. These include prescribed burn, herbicide application and cutting. All methods have some drawbacks when used alone.

Prescribed burn is inexpensive and effective against smaller trees. However, its effectiveness declines as tree size increases. Adequate fire fuel (usually last year's dead grass) is necessary for satisfactory results. Safety also is a concern since many property owners lack experience with fire and the equipment

required to conduct burns.

Foliar sprays and broadcast soil applications of herbicides have been ineffective against eastern redcedar. The preferred treatment method is an application of undiluted Tordon 22K liquid to the soil under individual trees at a rate of three or four milliliters per three feet of tree height. This method minimizes the amount of herbicide used and the exposure to non-target species. However, it still is time consuming and expensive when used on dense infestations or large tracts. Effectiveness also

varies on larger trees and label directions recommend against use on trees more than 15 feet tall.

Cutting is even more time consuming than herbicide application. It is effective because eastern redcedar is a non-sprouter. Trees cut below the lowest foliage will not regrow. Larger trees require a chain saw or tractor-mounted shears, but trees less than three feet tall can be quickly cut with hand shears. (DJ)

Acreage Insights



Tractor safety tips (part 1)

Tractors are one of the most important pieces of equipment on a farm, yet they are also among the most dangerous. More deaths are caused by tractors than by any other type of farm accident. It is, therefore, imperative that tractor owners routinely check their tractors and keep in mind the following safety guidelines:

- Make sure your tractor has a rollover protective structure (ROPS). Other than using safe operating procedures, having a ROPS is the most important thing you can do to ensure you don't become a farm fatality statistic.
- Make sure the power-take-off equipment is shielded. They are installed for your safety.
- Always shut off engine and be sure the implement motion has ceased before making any adjustments or repair.
- Make sure your tractor has rear-wheel and front-end weights that you can mount when needed. * Use rear-wheel weights to add stability for front-end loaders, and always lower the loader before transporting.
- Make sure the steps and platform of your tractor are free of loose tools, snow, ice, mud and other debris that might cause you to slip and fall.
- An ABC fire-extinguisher and a first-aid kit should always be readily available. Inspect fire extinguishers every six months to ensure your safety. (DJ)

Acreage reply

Q. What is the best way to remove snow from a long driveway?

Suggestion A: Don't get a four-wheel drive pickup with a snowplow. The snowplow on the front of the truck does nothing but move a bit of snow, sag the front springs, require large outlays of cash for the hydraulics, tire chains, funky lights and finally requires you to get the kit for another truck in five years when you trade in the old model.

Suggestion B: An alternative is to acquire a small tractor (20 - 30 HP) with a PTO and 3 pt. hitch, and attach a 3pth snowblower. The blower lets you throw the snow (and avoid building banks that cause drifting). A 2000 tractor with a 5.5 foot snowblower to clear your driveway may be the answer. Plowing is only useful if you can avoid building banks that will drift in the next time the snow blows.

Suggestion C: A 3-point grader blade behind a tractor works pretty well, as long as the blade can be angled enough. With too much snowfall, you can run out of space to plow the snow to (due to the previously plowed snow), at which time you would either need a snowblower or a loader to move the excess plowed snow further off the road. (DJ)

Rural living clinics scheduled

Lancaster County Extension will be hosting a Rural Living Clinic for people who are considering a move to the country or have recently moved and are still learning about independent living. The clinic is scheduled for Saturday, January 30 at the Extension Conference Center from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Some of the topics covered in this clinic include: learning what motivates people to want to move to the country, what you need to know about the location (flood plain, access rights,

building codes, security issues, etc.), waste management, water supply, costs of independent living (living with reduced public services) and freedoms and restrictions of rural living compared to living within a municipality. There will be a demonstration over the lunch hour showing how to access information at the Extension office—including: printed publications, and electronic information via web pages and the Nufacts audio information retrieval system.

Registration is limited. A registration fee of \$15 per person is required to reserve a place in the meeting. Call the extension office (402) 441-7180, to request a registration form. Registration fee covers handout materials, refreshments and noon lunch.

A second clinic is planned for March 13, which will address the unique needs of people currently living in the country. Watch for agenda details in next month's newsletter. (TD)

Use information at hand for better marketing, more profit

Producers who can efficiently use market intelligence and strategically update the total farm or ranch marketing plan have a better chance of weathering low commodity prices.

Some producers have large amounts of data but lack the ability to use it strategically to make marketing decisions. Others have little data but seem to use it in their favor to turn larger profits.

What's right for one individual might not work for another, but knowing the numbers and distribution of finished livestock weights, can be used to assist in scheduling actual marketings and to monitor significant changes in breeding herd performance. In most situations, the producer

will try to reduce variations among marketed livestock by weekly selection in order to increase returns. The quality and quantity of data will increase in the future as new techniques, technologies and means of inexpensive animal identification evolve. As farm/ranch planning and computing increases, so will the need for a total farm or ranch marketing management plan.

Management for marketing and for production may be independent, but should be considered jointly. The plans and methods for one could effect changes of another, such as rations and timing of marketing.

Most operations are somewhat inflexible with respect to changing schedules and the

terminal marketing stage. However, in some situations, different genetics, changing rations, or shipping times, facility design or re-design will change the marketing pattern. Information on the effect of such changes can be very valuable in estimating the profit foregone by not making the changes.

A marketing management plan tailored for the individual producer or operation, along with improved production and management standards and better record keeping, can potentially lower costs and improve profitability.

Source: Allen Wellman, Ph.D., agricultural economist, NU/IANR (WS)

University of Nebraska

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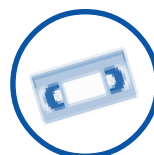
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Acreage & Small Farm Insights Web Site

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