

Custer County Weed & Pest

Did you know? A pure stand of Leafy Spurge can produce 200 pounds of seed per acre which is equivalent to approximately 25 millions seeds. One Leafy Spurge seed will produce a 24 foot patch in 4 years. Not all seed in the soil will germinate at the same time even when conditions are favorable, some weed seeds can remain alive in the soil for decades, 70 – 80% of mullein seed have been noted to germinate after 80 years!, Canadian Thistle seed can remain viable for 4 years or more! A fully grown Saltcedar plant can transpire up to 200 gallons of water per day. Fallen Saltcedar leaves exude slat that accumulates in the soil, over time the soil becomes too saline for other plants to grow.

Noxious weeds and pests infest millions of acres in the US causing damage to crops; land and native species. 4.5 million acres are infested statewide with losses totaling \$80 million annually. Invasive weeds cost the US \$123 billion yearly.

The time of year that we are planning our gardens, lawn care and landscaping is also time to develop a plan for controlling noxious weeds and pests on your property.

Weed control is nearly always designed to prevent or suppress a weed infestation including:

Biological weed control – Usually involves the use of insects and disease-causing agent that attack certain weed species. An example would be using the flea beetle to control Leafy Spurge.

Cultural controls – Involve several kinds of practices that can be used in cultivated plants to make it more difficult for weeds to survive including: tillage, mowing, time of planting, nurse crops, burning, mulching, flooding and shading.

Some weed problems can best be controlled with the use of herbicides. New products are becoming more environmentally compatible such as Milestone for Canadian Thistle infestations.

To control weeds that are growing, be sure that the plants are susceptible to the weed control method you choose. In some situations a combination of methods is advisable, for example, biological in combination with herbicides (to control the perimeter of the infestation).

Be a good neighbor and control your noxious weeds. Thousands of dollars are spent each year by landowners to control noxious weeds and pests on their property. If you fail to treat, seeds and pests may re-infest you neighbors treated area. State Statutes require landowners may be liable in civil suit. (Legal descriptions are printed in the local paper in April of each year.)

The Custer County Weed & Pest Board-Department and County Commissioners appreciate the continued cooperation of landowners both private and public in the management of noxious weeds and pests in Custer County. Management is an ongoing process sometimes requiring treatments lasting over years. We continue to monitor for best practices/methods and are available to provide information and spraying services to any non-private entity requiring assistance.

If you have any questions about enforcement procedures, state/local lists of noxious weeds, identification, treatment options, protocol, statutes, functions and services, please call, stop at our office, e-mail or mail your request. Internet information is also available, we can provide sites if requested.

Thank you for your cooperation and stop in and meet the Department staff.

Department Staff:

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