



# HOW TO TAKE THE LUCK OUT OF CONTROLLING YUCCA

## Individual Plant Treatment Whorl Applications

Robert K. Lyons and Megan K. Clayton\*

Yucca infests about 19 million acres of Texas rangeland, mostly in the western two-thirds of the state. Some of the more than 30 yucca species in Texas are beneficial to livestock and wildlife. For example, deer and livestock relish the flowers and fruit of Spanish dagger yucca.

However, many species cause problems when they develop dense stands, consuming water and nutrients needed by more desirable plants. Examples of problem species include San Angelo yucca and twisted leaf yucca.

Yucca plants have one or more whorls of leaves growing from a common root crown. The leaves are long, straight, fibrous, sharply pointed, and covered with a thick wax.

Here are two Brush Busters whorl application methods to control yucca that are effective, easy to use, and environmentally responsible. One method uses a low-volume herbicide plus oil, while the other uses undiluted herbicide. These methods can enable you to remove the yucca without damaging desirable plants.

Controlling yucca is not a one-time job. Because livestock and wildlife spread the seeds, new plants will emerge continually. Check pastures periodically to control unwanted plants.

This Brush Busters control method was developed and approved by professionals with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas A&M AgriLife Research, both agencies of the Texas A&M University System. Your results may vary with weather, but you should usually be able to kill 76 to 100 percent of the plants you treat.

### BRUSH BUSTERS HERBICIDE + OIL WHORL SPRAY

**Works well:** For controlling yucca and honey mesquite at the same time with the same treatment. Mesquite stem diameter must be less than 1.5 inches.

**When to apply:** Spring or summer during the growing season.

#### 1. Prepare the Equipment

Almost any type of pump-up hand sprayer can be used, but the most efficient way to apply the spray to many plants is with a backpack sprayer.

Make sure the sprayer's nozzle has a small orifice. One such nozzle is the ConeJet™ 5500-X1 (or X2). Compared to standard nozzles, this nozzle can reduce the amount of spray applied by 80 percent, making the use of chemicals much more cost-effective.

#### 2. Mix the Herbicide Spray

Use a mixture of triclopyr ester (trade names: Remedy Ultra, Clear Pasture, and Triclopyr 4EC) and diesel fuel oil or basal oil. Diesel acts as a coating agent to ensure that the herbicide covers the plant and is absorbed well.

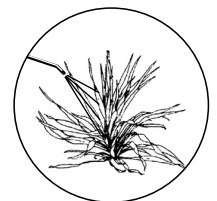
Pour the required amount of triclopyr ester into the mixing container, then add enough oil to get the total desired volume. To identify plants already treated, add Hi-Light™ blue dye (0.25 to 0.5 percent). Shake vigorously until mixed thoroughly.

RECOMMENDED STEM SPRAY HERBICIDE MIX OPTIONS

Ingredient	Concentration in Spray Solution	Tank Size		
		1 gal	5 gal	10 gal
Remedy Ultra, Clear Pasture, Triclopyr 4EC	15%	19 oz	95 oz	1.5 gal
Diesel or Basal oil	85%	109 oz	4.25 gal	8.5 gal
Hi-Light™ blue dye (optional)	0.25–0.5%	0.32–0.64 oz	1.6–3.2 oz	3.2–6.4 oz

#### 3. Spray the Yucca

Position the nozzle in the center of each whorl and spray for at least 2 seconds.



#### Keep These Points in Mind:

- ▶ If applied properly, the triclopyr ester + oil method is the least expensive method for controlling yucca. The cost rises if basal oil is used instead of diesel.
- ▶ Follow the herbicide label directions.
- ▶ Do not spray wet yuccas.

\*Professors and Extension Range Specialists, The Texas A&M University System

## BRUSH BUSTERS UNDILUTED WHORL SPRAY

**Works well:** For controlling only a few yucca plants or if applicator does not have a pump-up hand/backpack sprayer with the proper nozzle as used in the “Herbicide + Oil Whorl Spray” method.

**When to apply:** Spring or summer during the growing season.

### 1. Prepare the Equipment

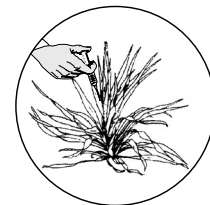
Use an application device that can measure and deliver individual 2 cc to 4 cc (milliliters) doses of herbicide. To treat a few yucca plants, you may use a disposable syringe.

When treating many plants, use an automatic syringe or exact-delivery handgun, such as a drench gun. Because these two devices connect to a reservoir (such as a drench bladder or herbicide container), you do not have to refill them manually.

Triclopyr ester, the active ingredient in herbicides for this method, corrodes plastics. After each use, thoroughly clean the syringe or drench gun with warm, soapy water and lubricate it with mineral oil.

### 2. Spray the Yucca

Apply undiluted triclopyr ester (trade names: Remedy Ultra, Clear Pasture, and Triclopyr 4EC) into the center of each whorl. Control at the 2-cc rate may drop 10 percent or more compared to the 4-cc rate.



#### Keep These Points in Mind:

- ▶ Follow directions on the herbicide label.
- ▶ Do not spray wet yuccas.
- ▶ Do not use premixed or ready-to-use triclopyr herbicides for this method.
- ▶ Clean application equipment thoroughly after each use.