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How to Take the Luck Out of Controlling Yucca

*Two safe and effective ways to
control yucca*

Individual Plant Treatment Series

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More than 30 species of yucca grow in Texas. Yucca infests some 19 million acres of rangeland, mostly in the western two-thirds of the state. Some species are considered desirable. For example, Spanish dagger is an attractive plant and both deer and livestock relish its flowers and fruits. Most species of yucca, however, are considered problem plants because they develop dense stands. Species such as twisted leaf yucca, Edwards yucca and San Angelo yucca can become so dense that other, more desirable plants cannot compete for water and nutrients. Thus, dense stands of yucca may need to be controlled.

A yucca plant has one or more whorls of leaves with a common root crown. Yucca leaves are long, straight, very sharp-pointed, very fibrous, and covered with a thick layer of wax. There are no broadcast herbicide treatments for yucca, but it can be controlled with individual plant treatments.

Here are two, three-step ways to control yucca. They are easy to use, environmentally responsible and effective. One method uses a low-volume herbicide + oil spray in each whorl, and the other method treats each whorl with undiluted herbicide. Using these Brush Busters methods, you will be able to selectively kill unwanted yucca plants with no damage to desirable vegetation.

Keep in mind that controlling yucca is not a one-time job. Livestock, wildlife, wind and water spread the seeds far and wide, so you will need to search for unwanted seedlings periodically and kill them.

Professionals with Texas Cooperative Extension and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station have developed, tested and approved these yucca control methods. Your results may vary, but you should be able to kill about seven of every ten plants treated.

Brush Busters Herbicide + Oil Whorl Spray

Works Best: When you wish to control mesquite and yucca with the same treatment and at the same time.

When to Apply: This method works best if used during the spring and summer.

① Prepare Equipment

The herbicide spray can be applied with a pump-up garden sprayer, backpack sprayer, or sprayer mounted on a 4-wheel all-terrain vehicle (ATV). The spray gun should be tipped with a ConeJet™ 5500-X1 adjustable cone nozzle. To reduce clogging and dripping, place a 100-mesh screen/check valve behind the nozzle.

② Mix Herbicide with Diesel

Use a mixture of Remedy™ herbicide and diesel fuel oil or vegetable oil for yucca control. The oil ensures that the herbicide will cover the plant thoroughly and be absorbed into the plant. The recommended mixture is 15% Remedy™ and 85% diesel fuel oil or vegetable oil (see mixing table below). Using vegetable oil instead of diesel fuel oil increases the cost but may be desirable in some situations. One vegetable oil known to mix well with Remedy™ is JLB Oil Plus™. When mixing Remedy™ with oil, pour the required quantity of Remedy™ into a mixing container or spray tank and then add enough oil to get the total volume desired. Shake or agitate the mixture vigorously until it is thoroughly mixed.

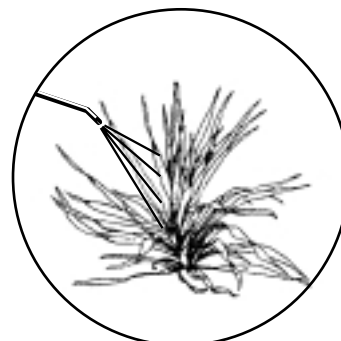
A “pre-mix” of Remedy™ and vegetable oil also is available. This “pre-mix” is called Remedy RTU™. To use this product, simply pour Remedy RTU™ from the container into the sprayer and apply to yucca following the Brush Busters directions for the *Remedy + Oil Whorl Spray*.

Mixing Table

Herbicide	% Herbicide	Amount of Remedy™*		
		1-gallon	5-gallon	10-gallon
Remedy™	15%	19 oz.	3 qt.	1.5 gal.

*The herbicide is mixed with diesel fuel or vegetable oil.

One ounce of Hi-Light™ blue spray-marking dye can be added for each gallon of spray mix or Remedy RTU™ to help identify treated plants.



③ Spray the Yucca

The *Remedy+ Oil Whorl Spray* is most effective if applied during the growing season. Make sure your spray gun is equipped with the 5500-X1 nozzle. Position the nozzle in the center of each whorl and spray for at least 2 seconds (slowly say “one Mississippi, two Mississippi” while depressing the trigger on the spray gun).

The Remedy+ diesel fuel mix will be the least expensive combination of herbicide and oil—about 2 cents per plant if applied properly. The cost will be higher if vegetable oil or Remedy RTU™ is used.

Keep These Points in Mind:

- Follow herbicide label directions.
- The cost of treatment escalates rapidly as the number of yucca plants and whorls per acre increases.
- This method will also control smooth-bark mesquite when applied as a stem spray (see Extension publication L-5144, “How to Beat Mesquite”).
- Do not spray when yuccas are wet.

Brush Busters Undiluted Whorl Spray

Works Best: If you have only a few yucca plants to control and do not have a backpack sprayer and the proper nozzle to use the *Herbicide + Oil Whorl Spray*.

When to Apply: This treatment works best if used during the spring or summer.

① Prepare Equipment

With this method you need an application device that can measure and deliver individual 2-cc to 4-cc doses of herbicide. For a small number of yucca plants, a disposable syringe can be used. For a large number of plants, an automatic syringe or exact-delivery handgun (e.g., drench gun) will be better. These two devices are connected to a reservoir (i.e., sheep drench bladder or herbicide container) so they don't have to be refilled manually. Remedy™, the herbicide used with this method, is corrosive to the plastics used in some automatic syringes. The automatic syringe or exact-delivery handgun should be thoroughly cleaned with warm, soapy water and lubricated with mineral oil after each use.

② Preparing the Herbicide

Use the herbicide Remedy™, undiluted. Add 1 ounce of High-Light™ blue spray-marking dye to each gallon of Remedy™ to help identify treated plants. Apply 2 cc to 4 cc of undiluted Remedy™ to each yucca whorl. The 4-cc rate will kill more plants, but at a cost of approximately 9 cents per whorl for the herbicide alone. Control may drop 10 percent or more with the 2-cc rate, but the herbicide cost will be about 4 cents per whorl.

③ Spray the Yucca

Place a dose of undiluted Remedy™ in the center of each whorl.



Keep These Points in Mind:

- Follow herbicide label directions.
- The cost of treatment escalates rapidly as the number of plants and whorls per acre increases.
- Do not spray when yuccas are wet.
- Do not use Remedy RTU™ for this treatment method.
- Thoroughly clean application equipment after use.

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