



# Control Options for Purple Loosestrife

## General information

Control efforts for purple loosestrife can be initiated before flowering or while plants are flowering, depending on the control method. If purple loosestrife is flowering or seeding, the flower heads and seeds should be sealed in plastic garbage bags and disposed as garbage. Do not compost buds, flowers or root fragments. Regardless of which control option is chosen, sites must be monitored and control repeated for the weed to be eradicated. If soil is disturbed during control efforts, it is best to reseed the disturbed area with a desired species, to prevent further establishment of weeds. Encouraging growth of desirable species through the use of applied fertilizers and/or rotational grazing will help prevent the reestablishment of weed species. Maintaining these will assist in weed control efforts by shading any weed seeds in the soil, making it more difficult for seeds to germinate.



## Manual/Mechanical Techniques

Small infestations of purple loosestrife can be somewhat controlled through hand digging. Since purple loosestrife spreads by root, it is important to remove as much root as possible, while realizing that some roots will be missed and plants will regenerate from these fragments. All root fragments which are removed from the soil should be sealed in plastic and treated as garbage. If root fragments are released into the water, they will survive to start plants elsewhere.

Mowing or cutting will prevent purple loosestrife from flowering, but will not kill the plants.

## Chemical Recommendations

Purple loosestrife can be controlled using specific herbicides. Purple loosestrife should be sprayed in the summer, when the plants are flowering. When using herbicides, always read and follow label directions for rates, spraying conditions, personal protective equipment and grazing intervals. Do not spray when it is windy or raining, or when rain is forecast. Do not mow sprayed plants for at least 2 weeks after herbicide application. Herbicides should not be sprayed within 60 feet of water bodies and creeks, without further consultation with the Noxious Weed Board. Remember, it is the herbicide applicators responsibility to apply the product in accordance to the instructions on the label.

### *Glyphosate*

Plants can be treated individually (spot-sprayed), with an herbicide containing glyphosate (such as Round-up and Touchdown) at a 1-2% rate. Spray plants until they are just wet. Avoid spraying desired vegetation, as this herbicide can damage both broad-leaf plants and grasses. NEVER apply Round-up or other herbicides to standing water unless they are distinctly labeled for aquatic use. Other ingredients, besides glyphosate, in these products are toxic to fish.

- **Always read and understand the label of the herbicides you choose to use.**
- **More is NOT better when using herbicides, and may actually hinder the ability of the herbicide to injure the target plant if the solution is too strong. This wastes money and effort and puts more product into the environment than is necessary. ALWAYS follow the recommended rates on the label.**
- **With all herbicides, when you apply them is as important as how you apply them.**

*The mention of a specific product brand name in this document is not, and should not be construed as an endorsement or as a recommendation for the use of that product.* Herbicide information is taken from the WSU Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook 2010.