

CONTROLLING MUSK THISTLE

Does anybody like musk thistles? If not, let's do something about them.

Following recent rains you're probably anxious to get into the field for planting. Don't forget, though, that this also is the best time to control musk thistles. And I'll also bet that you can get into your pastures to spray at least one or two days sooner than you can get into row crop fields to plant.

Did you have musk thistles last year? If so, I'm sure you'll have them again this spring. And the current rosette growth form is the ideal stage for controlling these plants this spring. That means spray herbicides soon, while your musk thistle plants still are in that rosette form, and very few plants will send up flowering stalks for hand digging later.

Several herbicides are effective and recommended for musk thistle control. My current favorites are called Milestone and GrazonNext, which basically is a mixture of Milestone and 2,4-D. Both Milestone and GrazonNext also will help control other weeds that usually appear later in the season.

Other herbicides also can control musk thistles in pastures this spring – like Chaparral, Cimarron, Overdrive, and Curtail. A tank mix of dicamba and 2,4-D also works very well. No matter which weed killer you use, though, be sure to read and follow label instructions, and be especially sure to spray on time.

All these herbicides will work for you this spring if you spray soon, before musk thistles bolt and send up their flowering stalks.

After flowering, though, the shovel is about the only method remaining to control thistles this year.

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