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Multi-stemmed Brush Species – Buckbrush

One of the more common woody species found in eastern Kansas grazing lands is coralberry. More commonly known as buckbrush, it's a native perennial predominantly spread by runners, with plants eventually forming dense patches that shade out desirable forage species.

Control is typically a multi-year approach. If using a controlled burn or mechanical removal (mowing, etc...), removal of top growth after plants have leafed out can be effective. At this growth stage, carbohydrates stored in roots are at their lowest level, requiring the plant to 'start over from scratch'. Over time, this can weaken plants and make them less competitive.

For either method to be successful, timing is important. As of mid-April, most buckbrush is just beginning to leaf out. Prescribed fire at this stage may not be late enough to attain maximum control and even if it does, multiple years of fire are likely going to be necessary to make much of a dent in established colonies. Mowing in early to mid-May is a possibility during this growth stage as well, but multiple years are required for mowing to be effective.

If using herbicides, the best application window occurs just as the leaves start to change from a light to dark green color (the low point in the nonstructural carbohydrate cycle). Numerous herbicides are labelled for buckbrush control with a number of 2,4-D LVE formulations typically effective at a relatively economical rate. If you're after other weed/brush species as well, consider combination products with additional active ingredients like picloram (restricted use), triclopyr, aminopyralid, etc...

Herbicides may damage desirable grasses under the right conditions and all of the aforementioned herbicides will do significant damage to desirable legumes and other broadleaf forbs in the forage stand. *Always* read and follow label directions prior to application. For additional information on rates/timings/products, request a copy of (or link to...) the 2021 KSU Chemical Weed Control Guide available through any District Office.

Pest Control on Fruit Trees

If you've got fruit trees in northeast Kansas, you have plenty of pests to contend with – on both the insect *and* disease front. It will soon be time to initiate a control program, but there's one step you should probably take before you get started: checking fruit buds.

Without fruit buds, there is no fruit, and in most cases no reason to get too excited about a pest control program. To check fruit buds, simply touch a few buds. Dead buds will readily fall from the tree. There is some concern that the cold snap in February damaged peach, nectarine, and apricot trees, so pay special attention to those fruit species.

Once you've determined fruit buds are intact, start planning a control program if you have not already. If you're new to fruit pest control, or think a good refresher might help, check out all three of our fruit pest control publications: *Spray Schedules for Growing Apples at Home*, *Spray Schedules for Growing Stone Fruit at Home*, and *Fruit Pesticides, Active Ingredients, and Labeled Fruits*. All three are available upon request from any of our District Extension Offices or by doing a simple search for the title followed by KSRE.