



Canada Thistle

Cirsium arvense



- Perennial
- Grows 1-4 feet tall
- Blooms in July-August
- Grows in a diverse range of habitats
- Reproduces by seeds and rootstock

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Suggested Control Methods for Canada Thistle

Mechanical & Cultural Methods

Repeated Cutting/Mowing: Cut plants every 2-3 weeks during the growing season to prevent them from producing food and depleting root energy. This is effective for light infestations.

Tillage: For cultivated areas, frequent tillage (every 21 days) for several months can work, but ensure all root fragments have been removed to avoid spreading them.

Competitive Crops: Planting alfalfa or forage grasses can outcompete thistle once established.

Grazing: High-intensity grazing can suppress thistle over time.

Chemical Control (Herbicides)

Timing is Key: Apply herbicides when plants are actively growing, typically in late spring (bud to flower stage) or early fall. Always Use a surfactant to Improve herbicide absorption.

Effective Ingredients: Look for products with clopyralid (Stinger, Curtail), aminopyralid (Milestone), picloram (Tordon), or combinations with 2,4-D or dicamba.

Non-Selective Options: Glyphosate (Roundup) is effective but kills most plants; use it for spot treatments or for total vegetation control.

Biological Control

Insects: Stem gallflies and seed head weevils can help reduce thistle populations.

Integrated Management

Combine Methods: For instance, mow, then apply a fall herbicide the same year to catch regrowth.

Prevention: Minimize soil disturbance and maintain healthy native vegetation to prevent establishment