



Control Options for Giant Hogweed

General information

Giant hogweed is native to Asia and has been imported as a garden ornamental in the U.S.. The plant grows quite tall, reaching heights between 10-15 feet and the flowers can be up to 2 feet in diameter. It looks very similar to a widespread native plant, cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*). Giant hogweed is currently only found in small populations in a few locations in Whatcom County. **The sap of giant hogweed can cause severe blistering of the skin**, especially on sunny days. Care should be taken whenever working around this plant.



Manual/Mechanical Techniques

Giant hogweed can be controlled through hand digging and is best when initiated early in the spring. When digging, try to remove as much of the root as possible to prevent regrowth. Do not compost buds or flowers. Because of the hazardous sap, always wear a long-sleeve shirt, pants and gloves when working near the plant. Thoroughly wash any skin exposed to the plant immediately. It is best to conduct manual control work on cloudy days.

Chemical Recommendations

Giant hogweed can be controlled using specific herbicides. Giant hogweed should be sprayed in spring, as the flowering stalk begins to elongate. When using herbicides, always read and follow label directions for rates, spraying conditions, personal protective equipment and grazing intervals. If spraying is the chosen option, spray late in the evening to reduce the direct impact on pollinating insects. 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.

Plants can be treated individually either as a stem injection or spot-sprayed with an herbicide containing *Glyphosate* (RoundUp® and many other brands). Spray plants with a 1-2% glyphosate solution until they are just wet. A 5% solution of glyphosate can be used as a stem injection with a hand-held device into each leaf cane. Avoid spraying desired vegetation, as this herbicide can damage both broad-leaf plants and grasses. Maintaining the grass will assist in weed control efforts by shading any weed seeds in the soil, making it more difficult for seeds to germinate. Avoid spraying desired vegetation, as this herbicide can damage other plants.

NEVER apply RoundUp® or other herbicides to standing water unless they are distinctly labeled for aquatic use. Ingredients in non-aquatic products may be toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms. Aquatic formulations of herbicides are generally only available to licensed pesticide applicators in Washington State. If the target plants are immediately adjacent to or are in standing water, a state permit may be required in order to treat those plants with an aquatically approved herbicide.

- **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.