

## **BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR CANADA THISTLE IN NATIVE PRAIRIES**

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*Abstract:* Cooperative studies involving the University of Minnesota and Talcot Lake Wildlife Management Area personnel were conducted to determine the Best Management Practices to control Canada thistle in native prairies. BMP practices included clipping to prevent seed production or deplete root carbohydrate reserves, optimization of herbicide control, and spring or summer herbicide timings designed around the pre-July 15<sup>th</sup> nondisturbance goal for optimum waterfowl production. Biomass data, Canada thistle shoot counts, and visual control ratings will be presented. Most native forbs survived clopyralid applications, although flowering and seed production were reduced or eliminated during the treatment season. Native sunflowers, though killed, were reestablishing the year after herbicide applications ended. Clopyralid should be applied at 8-12 oz/A spring or fall to control Canada thistle. A sequential application of clopyralid should be planned the following year. Waiting until after the July 15<sup>th</sup> target to optimize waterfowl production before entering sites with sprayers will result in decreased control of Canada thistle. Clopyralid performed well at application gallonages of 20 to 30 GPA even in heavy canopy or plant litter situations. Applying higher gallonages did not improve performance. Surfactant use did not consistently improve Canada thistle control. Excessive surfactant rates may decrease control. Application of clopyralid below labeled rates may require additional herbicide applications, which may increase damage to desired native forbs. Aminopyralid offers greater consistency of thistle control and improved environmental profile compared to clopyralid, while native forb tolerance appears similar to that of clopyralid.

**Key Words / Search Terms:** Canada thistle, *Cirsium arvense*, control, native prairies, clopyralid, aminopyralid.

**Oral Presentation** is requested

**Presentation Needs:** computer, lcd projector, screen for PowerPoint presentation.

**Appropriate Session:** Prairie Management

**Presentation Award:** I am not a student.