

Prickly Pear Cactus (*Opuntia spp.*)

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Prickly pear is a common pasture weed that can cause injury to livestock, pets and humans. It is native to southern United States and can be found in sunny, well-drained pastures. It propagates by division or cloning of vegetative parts.



Picture credits: Jonael Bosques, UF/IFAS Extension.

Season: perennial

Height: 3-20 feet.

Growth habit: spreading to upright

Roots: fibrous

Leaves: alternate; simple; plate-like; elliptic with no venation; thorny.

Flower: orange; red; purple; white. Summer flowering

Fruit: 1-3 inches long. Oval; fleshy; purple; thorny.

Comments: Fruit is suitable for human consumption. Invasiveness is unknown and tolerates acidic and alkaline soils.

Herbicides:

Active ingredient	Application Methods
Triclopyr ester	Spot treatment: Triclopyr ester 20% + diesel fuel or basal oil (80%)
Fluroxypyr + 2,4-D	Broadcast Application: Apply Trump Card in water. The use of a surfactant is required. A maximum of 3pt/acre per growing season is allowed. The total of 6 pt/acre is required for effective control.

References:

Gilman, E.F. 2014. *Opuntia spp.* Prickly Pear Cactus. EDIS Publication #FPS448.

Sellers, B.A., and P. Devkota. 2020. Weed Management in Pastures and Rangeland. EDIS Publication #SS-AGR-08.