



# EASTERN UP INVASIVE: Leafy Spurge

*Euphorbia esula*



Photo by C. Evans

## WHY THE CONCERN?

Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) was accidentally introduced from Eurasia in crop seed. Once established the plant reduces pasture productivity due to its inedible nature. The seed is durable and can remain viable for 10 years. Leafy spurge can disperse by wildlife, wind, water, vehicles, contaminated soil and hay.

## FEATURES OF LEAFY SPURGE

Leafy spurge is a single-stemmed plant, grows up to 3 feet tall and occupies habitats ranging from moist streambanks to dry roadsides. It has clusters of yellow-greenish flowers and contains a milky sap.

## CONTROL METHOD



Mechanical control, by repeated cutting, mowing, or grazing, is effective for large stands. Leafy spurge can also be controlled by spraying the foliage in spring and fall. Spurge beetles are biocontrol options except in disturbed areas. The plants should be treated in the spring before flowering. Do not disturb plants if seeds pods are visible. For additional advice about identifying or controlling this invasive species, please contact Biological Services at (906) 248-8652.



Photos by J. Randall

Photos courtesy of Chris Evans, University of Illinois; John M. Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org



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