

# LEAFY SPURGE

## Tier 2



### **Overview**

Leafy Spurge is capable of dominating habitats. All parts of the plant contain poisonous latex sap capable of killing cattle and causing dermatitis in humans and livestock. Leafy spurge is very problematic in Manitoba and is especially concentrated in the southwest.

### **Habitat**

Leafy spurge can be found in pastures, agricultural lands, roadsides, ditches, and wooded and riparian areas.

### **Identification**

**General:** A deeply rooted, erect perennial that grows from 40-90 cm (15-36") tall.

**Stems:** Pale green, hairless, tough, and smooth. A milky white sap is secreted from all parts of the plant when damaged. Spreads rapidly by seed production and vegetative reproduction.

**Leaves:** Numerous smooth narrow green leaves 2-7.5 cm (3/4-3") are found along the stems.



**Flowers and Fruit:** Flowers are not prominent and found at the tip of the stems. They are arranged in numerous small clusters surrounded by green to yellow heart shaped bracts. Flowers appear from May to July. Fruit is a 3-seeded capsule that explodes upon ripening and hurtles seeds up to 5 m (16') from the plant.

**Roots:** The roots of a mature plant can reach 7.9 m (26 ft) deep and move laterally 4.6 m (15 ft) annually.