

Cucumber tree

Parmentiera aculeata



Photos courtesy Ken Murray



Native to Central America, cucumber tree was introduced as an ornamental for its edible fruits. It has invaded rainforest in some far north Queensland catchments, outcompeting native rainforest trees and replacing native vegetation.

Legal requirements

Cucumber tree is not a prohibited or restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. However, by law, everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take reasonable and practical measures to minimise the biosecurity risks associated with invasive plants under their control.

Local governments must have a biosecurity plan that covers invasive plants in their area. This plan may include actions to be taken on cucumber tree. Some of these actions may be required under local laws. Contact your local government for more information.

Description

Cucumber tree is a small to large tree with a short, thick trunk and pale bark. Branches have short, stout spines at the nodes. Leaves are compound, opposite, trifoliate, on long narrowly-winged leaf stalks, and have three elliptical leaflets, each 4–8 cm long.



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Flowers appear in leaf axils, along branches and on the trunk of the old wood. They are trumpet-shaped, green with brown-purple lines and 5–6.5 cm long. Yellow-green cucumber-like fruit are ridged, red-stained, 11–17 cm long and 2–3 cm wide, and often curved.

Control

Manual control

Seedlings can be manually removed. If larger plants are cut down or ringbarked, the stump must be treated with a suitable herbicide as the tree will otherwise reshoot.

Herbicide control

There are no herbicides products specifically registered for the control of cucumber tree in Queensland. However, a permit allows people generally to use some herbicide products to control cucumber tree as an invasive plant in various situations.

Table 1. Herbicides for the control of cucumber tree

Situation	Herbicide	Rate	Registration details	Comments
Non-agricultural areas, domestic and public service areas, commercial and industrial areas, bushland/ native forests, roadsides, rights of way, vacant lots, wastelands, dunal and coastal areas	Triclopyr 200 g/L + picloram 100 g/L (e.g. Apparent Slogger Herbicide) or Triclopyr 200 g/L + picloram 100 g/L + aminopyralid 25 g/L (Tordon RegrowthMaster)	1 L per 4 L water 1.5 mL per injection	APVMA permit PER11463 (expires 30/04/2027)	Stem injection Inject at intervals of 6–8 cm around the base of the tree during the active growth period The cut of the injection must be through the bark and deep enough to place the chemical in contact with the sap wood Apply the herbicide immediately after the dose pocket is made Ensure that any trees treated with herbicide will not cause a hazard for people or public utilities when they finally fall
	Triclopyr 240 g/L + picloram 120 g/L (e.g. Access)	1 L per 60 L diesel		Basal bark spray or cut stump application Cut stump to less than 10 cm above the ground
	Fluroxypyr 200 g/L (e.g. Wynca Fluroxypyr 200 Herbicide)	35 mL per 1 L diesel, kerosene or Biosafe Biodegradable Herbicide Carrier		Basal bark spray Do not spray if rain is likely within one hour
	Fluroxypyr 333 g/L (e.g. Starane Advanced)	21 mL per 1 L diesel or Biosafe Biodegradable Herbicide Carrier		

The herbicides listed in Table 1 are permitted under APVMA PER11463 (expires 30/04/2027). Persons who wish to prepare for use and/or use products for the purposes specified in this permit must read or have read to them, the details and conditions of the permit. The permit is available on the APVMA website [apvma.gov.au](https://www.apvma.gov.au)

Read the label carefully before use. Always use the herbicide in accordance with the directions on the label.

Fact sheets are available from biosecurity.qld.gov.au. The control methods recommended should be used in accordance with the restrictions (federal and state legislation, and local government laws) directly or indirectly related to each control method. These restrictions may prevent the use of one or more of the methods referred to, depending on individual circumstances. While every care is taken to ensure the accuracy of this information, the department does not invite reliance upon it, nor accept responsibility for any loss or damage caused by actions based on it.



See Table 1 for the treatment options in situations allowed by the permit.

Prior to using the herbicides listed under this permit (PER11463) you must read or have read to you and understand the conditions of the permit. To obtain a copy of this permit visit [apvma.gov.au](https://www.apvma.gov.au).

Follow up

Monitor treated areas regularly for any new seedlings or regrowth.

More information

More information is available from your local government or visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au.