Tall Larkspur grows in a variety of habitats sun to semi-shade including the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, aspen forests, coulees and on hillsides in higher elevations.

Tall Larkspur is very toxic to cattle and can be toxic to horses and sheep when ingested in higher amounts. Cattle are more susceptible to larkspur poisoning for reasons not understood. The alkaloid methyllycaconitine causes curare-like effects on the skeletal muscles and can cause motor paralysis, followed by death from asphyxiation. Constipation and bloating are common signs of larkspur poisoning. An affected animal should be kept quiet with its head uphill.

This species is quite conspicuous and may be subject to casual picking. Larkspur is a member of the Delphinium family and therefore it is easily recognizable to anyone familiar with the ornamental variety.

Herbicides containing picloram are effective in controlling Tall Larkspur. Herbicides that contain metsulfuron, however, can actually increase the toxicity of the plant. Other methods of control include handpicking or digging, bagging and destroying (while taking care not to touch the plant with your bare hands).

For more information regarding Tall Larkspur, please contact the Brazeau County Agricultural Department at (780) 542-7777.