

Establishing Crops the CA Way

1.4 Controlling weeds the CA way

What is weed control?

Weed control is the process of stopping undesired plants (weeds) from competing with desired crops. The process may be undertaken with manual means, powered cultivators, thermal or chemical means.



Why control weeds?

Weeds restrict the growth of plants and 'house' pests and diseases. Weeds compete with our crops for nutrients, space, water and soil. Weeds can block drainage canals and pipes. Weeds hamper the movement of various types of machinery used for cultivation. Weeding is labour-intensive and weeds drastically increase the cost of production drastically.

How to control weeds the CA

Weeds can discourage farmers from practicing CA. Upon adopting CA use a combination of different weed control methods including:

- Use clean seed, free from weed seeds together with well decomposed manure. Remove weeds before they produce seeds, to reduce the weed-seed bank that is in the soil.
- Apply mechanical methods which do not involve soil inversion e.g. machine or manually powered cultivators, hand pulling of weeds, shallow weeding, slashing, etc.)
- Use cover crops and other forms of soil cover such as mulching, crop rotations, and combinations of rotations with mechanical methods.
- Introduce animal or plant enemies of the weeds that leave your crop alone e.g. plant pathogens, parasitic plants & other organisms.
- Use chemical methods either alone or in combination with other methods.



- Control weeds before planting using chemicals, mechanically or soil cover protection
- Control weeds soon after crop has germinated while they are weakest & before they seed.
- Plant cover crops or apply mulch between crop rows to suppress or keep weeds away.
- Plant cover-crops that can be left growing after harvesting the main crop. Maintain weeds in continuous control and check.