

Weed Control Chemicals Effective Against Small Weeds, Smith Says

By: Max Smith
County Agri. Agent

The best time to kill weeds when they are germinating, when quite small and under inches high.

The more mature weeds get the greater the root system and the harder they are to kill with either cultivation or chemicals. The use of herbicides (spray materials) is rapidly replacing much of the mechanical cultivation of the past. This means that a good understanding is necessary of both the methods of application and the materials to use. In growing corn both the pre-emergence application (before the corn is up) and the post-emergence (after it is up) can be used successfully; the objective to keep in mind is to get the weeds before they have any size. Many growers prefer the pre-emergence treatment because heavier rates of herbicides may be used and there is less danger of damage to the corn plants.

In this year the two most common herbicides to be used are the amine form of 2,4-D and Atrazine. Both of

these are good weed killers and their use depends upon the weeds to be controlled.

For the average corn field with normal trouble from annual broad-leaf weeds, the use of 2,4-D at the rate of 2 pints per acre just before the corn comes through the ground or in the spike stage will do a good job and will be the cheapest.

The use of Atrazine 80W as a liquid spray at the rate of 2½ pounds per acre in 25 gallons of water, or the use of 20 pounds of the granular form, Atrazine 10G, is strongly recommended where there is a grass problem and where the corn is to be grown without any cultivations. This material gives very good control on all of the annual or perennial grasses that are difficult to control in the row.

These materials may be applied at planting time or as long as three weeks after planting the corn, the corn may be up and small in size without injury.

When spraying with Atrazine it is very important to keep the agitator running at

all times and use a 50 mesh screen or coarser in the suction strainer as well as in the nozzles.

Some growers may want to reduce the cost of the Atrazine by spraying only a 12 to 14-inch band over the row, this means that the rate per acre should be reduced in proportion and that cultivation will be required between the rows.

With the use of Atrazine as a weed control chemical growers should not attempt to grow any cover crop in the corn this summer. Atrazine will prevent the germination of the ryegrass or bromegrass seeds, however, with the 2,4-D applications the normal cover crops may be sowed after the last cultivation.

All spray operators should be extremely careful in the handling of these materials and their sprayers. These chemicals will kill many desired crops and plants in adjoining fields and properties. The drift of spray particles and fumes should be considered at all times.

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