

## Plastic Film Takes Weed Worry Out of Home Gardening, Specialist Says

A roll of plastic film may soon take the hoe-work out of home gardening. Weed control chemicals mixed into the film help the backyard gardener get rid of weeds the easy way; it keeps them from ever coming up when the film is put down around garden plants or over newly planted seeds.

Dr. V. J. Fisher, associate professor of horticulture at the University of Delaware, tested the herbicide film and believes it offers home gardeners a practical and relatively labor-free way to control weeds. "It evenly distributes an accurate amount of herbicide just where it's needed, when it's needed. The new film solves the problem that has always interfered most with substituting weeding with substituting weeding of film may be needed.

grease by the home gardener—getting the chemicals distributed evenly.

Fisher notes that many a garden enthusiast has eagerly planted a large garden plot only to give up in disgust when weeds take over. The new film may be the answer.

The thin plastic is put down either at planting time or several weeks later. This depends on what herbicide is being used. When sprinkled lightly, the film dissolves within one to three minutes leaving the correct amount of herbicide as invisible insurance against future weeds.

In some cases, for all-season control, two separate applications of film may be needed.

On strawberries, for example, Fisher suggests putting down control chemicals for about a film containing dacthal when the plants are set out and another containing diphenamid six weeks later.

Gardeners will have to keep certain precautions in mind; for instance, each particular herbicide film must be used only on the plants for which it is recommended. Also, since the film dissolves very rapidly in water, the ground must be dry before laying it down. Even the gardener's hands must be dry to keep the film from sticking to them.

The film is lightweight and

difficult to handle in a breeze, so it should be put down on a still day; weight it down with small clumps of soil until you turn on the sprinkler. Naturally the garden plot should be weed-free since the herbicide only controls weeds that have not yet germinated.

Check the label; herbicides don't control all garden weeds. If you've had trouble in the past with a particular weed that's resistant to the herbicide, switch to a different herbicide-film, or do a little hand weeding.

The herbicide-film will prob-

ably soon be in commercial production and shortly thereafter could be available from nurserymen or seed companies, Fisher believes. The Baldwin Montrose Chemical Co., Gary, Indiana made the sample films for his experiments.

The hardest part of gardening is getting rid of weeds; this new development in chemical control may be just the ticket for easy backyard gardening, he says.

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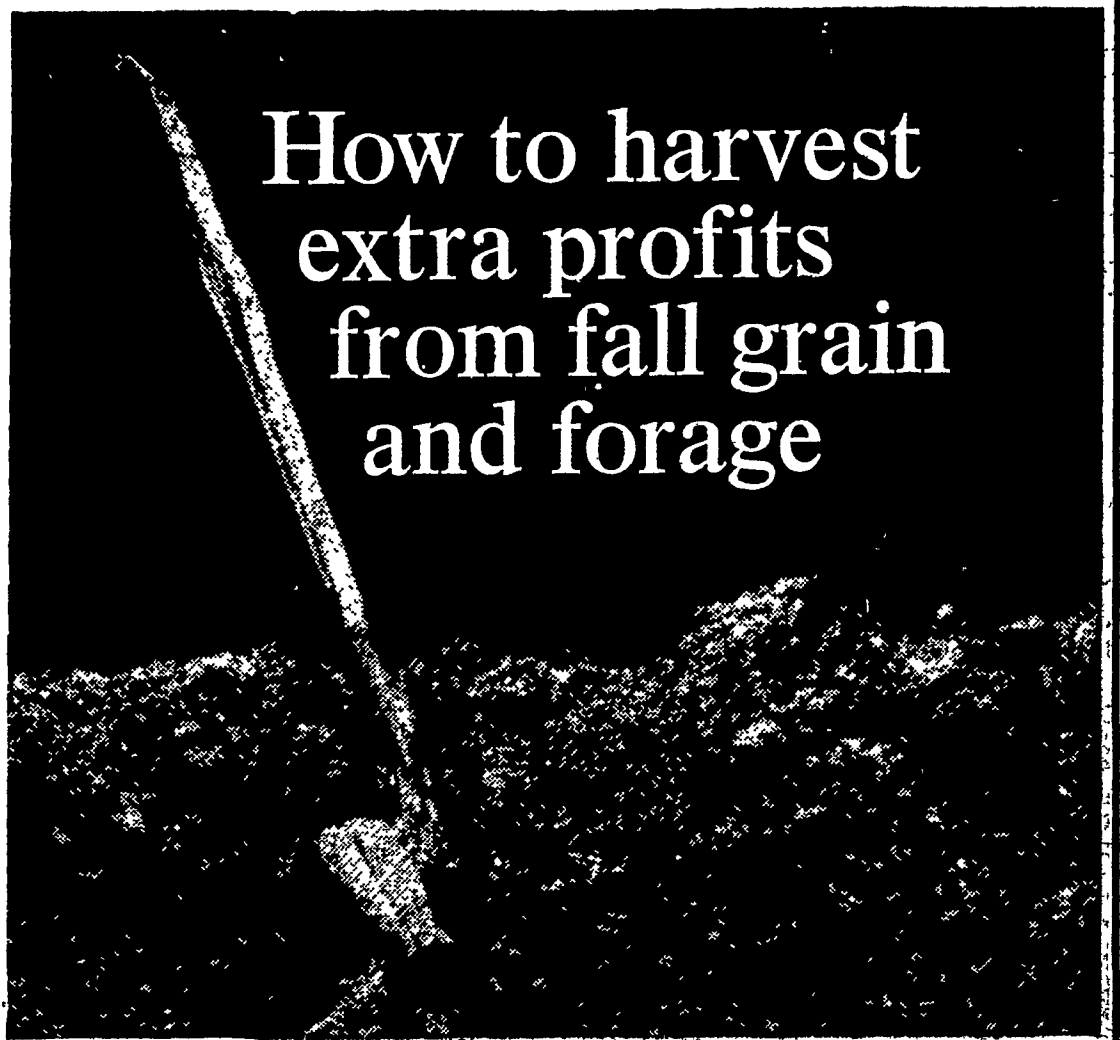
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