

There's no miracle control for weeds

NEWARK, Del. — A question frequently asked by home gardeners is "Isn't there some chemical I can spray on my garden to get rid of weeds?" It would be nice if there was some product that could effectively zap all those weeds that grow so lushly around your onions and tomatoes each year. But don't look for any chemical miracles, says University of Delaware Extension horticulturist Dr. Charles Dunham. When it comes to weed control in the home garden, there aren't any miracle products.

Although farmers, nurserymen and professional maintenance people make extensive use of chemicals to control the weeds, this method is not promising for

the average home gardener — at least not in the way he usually envisions, of just spraying on a chemical and watching the weeds vanish.

Weed killers are most successful when one is dealing with a single kind of plant, explains Dunham. In this case it's often possible to kill the weeds at a susceptible stage and not damage the plants you want to grow.

Most home gardeners are familiar with crabgrass control on lawns. A chemical is applied before the weed germinates and it controls the young crabgrass seedlings without damaging the lawn. Some of the same chemicals — like Dacthal — which are used to control crabgrass in lawns will also control germinating weed

grass in flower and vegetable gardens. But you must apply the chemical to a weed-free soil before the weed grasses sprout. Afterwards, it's too late. Also, the chemical is less effective in controlling some annual broadleaf weeds, and it is of no value at all with perennial weeds. To make matters even more difficult, the amount of herbicide you can use is very critical. Too much will cause plant injury. Too little gives poor weed control.

What about contact killers like 2,4-D? This type of herbicide controls many broadleaf weeds and is safe for a lawn as it does not damage grasses. However, it is dangerous to use this herbicide around flower and

vegetables as these plants are as susceptible to it as the weeds you want to get rid of, points out Dunham. Also, 2,4-D does not kill grass-type weeds.

Other contact killers such as Amitrol will kill most weeds. They can be used where they can be sprayed on weeds without drifting onto garden plants. But such herbicides are most effective on small weeds between 2-4 inches high.

Amitrol is one of the safest materials to use in certain specialized situations, such as ridding walks and driveways of weeds, a tedious hand chore.

Another disadvantage of chemical weed controls for the home garden is that many of them are not easily

obtainable in small quantities, notes the horticulturist.

So the answer for home gardeners is, yes, chemicals can be used to control some annual weeds by applying the proper amount to the soil before weed seeds germinate, and by careful use of directed sprays on unwanted weeds in shrub beds, borders and along walks.

But for the average homeowner with the usual-sized garden, the best methods of weed control are still those old-fashioned standbys — mulches, the hoe, and down-on-your-knees hand labor.

Black plastic or old newspapers covered with a light layer of any organic mulch give excellent, safe

weed control. Where newspapers are used, be sure to add extra fertilizer. Two to four inches of almost any mulch (woodchips, bark, licorice root, straw, grass clippings) will also give good weed control with a minimum of hand weeding in flowers and vegetables.

One bit of advice from Dunham — where hand weeding is necessary, get at it early, while weeds are still small and the ground is moist from a recent rain or watering. There may be no chemical miracles available to keep the home garden weed-free. But some simple mechanical control measures taken early in the growing season can take much of the hard work out of this unpopular garden chore.

Shorthorn-Polled Shorthorn breed to present 'Outlook '79'

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — "Performance Testing and Carcass Evaluation", "Selection" and "The Steer Show — How it Influences the Industry" will be three

major topics at seminars during Outlook '79 — An Industry Update, a national meeting for Shorthorn/Polled Shorthorn breeders at the Holiday Inn

East in Springfield, Ill., on July 6.

The three topics will be presented at 9 a.m. by Dr. T. D. Rich, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater,

Okl.; Glenn Klippenstein, Glenkirk Farms, Maysville, Mo.; and Mac Smith of Derby Farms, Crestwood, Ky., respectively. Moderator for the day's activities that are expected to draw cattlemen from across the United States will be Doug Parrett of the University of Illinois.

An afternoon session will include a panel presentation entitled "Let's Talk Type" with question and answer periods and a summary of the day to be followed by an

evening barbecue sponsored by Cagwin Cattle Services, Inc., of Virginia, Ill.

Alan K. Sears, junior activities for the American Shorthorn Association, said the Outlook '79 program is part of activities scheduled during the National Junior Shorthorn Heifer Show at the Illinois State Fairgrounds at Springfield, July 5-7.

Rich, Klippenstein and Smith will also serve as judges for this national junior show that expects well over 300 entries this year,

Sears said, with judging to take place on July 7, beginning at 8 a.m. Reservations to attend the Outlook '79 activities should be made directly through the offices of the American Shorthorn Association in Omaha, Neb., Sears said.

The combination of Outlook '79 — An Industry Update and the national junior show will provide one of the most informative and valuable breed activities held in recent years, Sears concluded.

Chinese scientists begin U.S. tour

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — Eight botanical scientists from the People's Republic of China have begun a month's tour of U.S. institutions engaged in botanical research and education at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The delegation, led by Dr. Tang Pei-Song, Peking, includes six members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Their five day tour of the Washington area, April 30 - May 4 also included stops at the U.S. Department

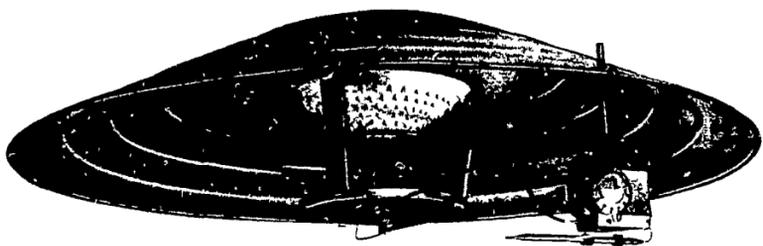
of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md. research facility, the National Arboretum, the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Here to study the interrelationships that exist among research,

education and citizen, the delegation was instructed by University of Maryland faculty members and Cooperative Extension Service specialists in botany, horticulture and agronomy.



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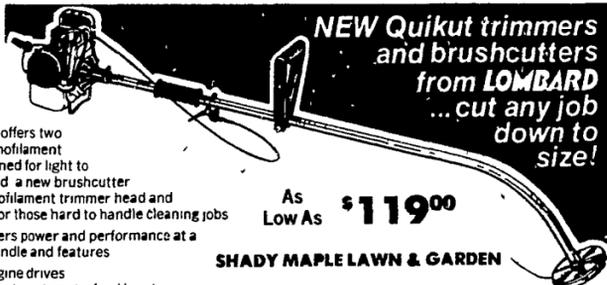
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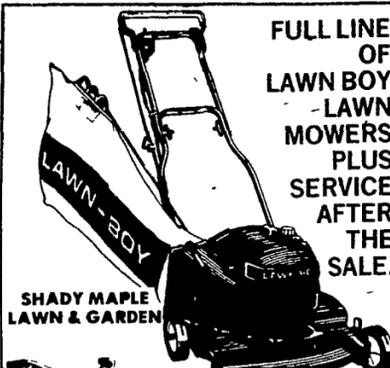
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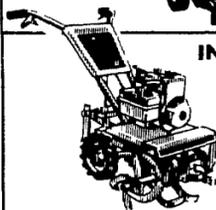
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