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SPECIAL
COLLECTION

Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg. Agricultural Extension Service.

MR-81.

Killing Weeds With 2,4-D

gricultural Economics

Dandelions, plantain and many other weeds that grow in grassy areas can be killed with little difficulty or expense by spraying them with a new agricultural chemical called 2,4-D. It is sold in a form which can be mixed with water and applied as a spray.

2,4-D kills lawn weeds slowly; sometimes a period of from 2 to 3 weeks may pass before weeds that are sprayed with it actually die. 2,4-D not only kills the leaves and tops of most kinds of weeds but it also kills their roots. It does not injure most kinds of grasses which are commonly used in lawns and pastures.

How To Use 2,4-D on Lawns

2,4-D can best be applied to lawns by mixing it with water, then spraying the mixture evenly over the surface of the lawn. The chemical is being sold under various trade names. Some of these products are in liquid, and some are in powdered form. They can be obtained from most hardware, department, and seed stores.

In spraying a lawn with 2,4-D, first measure out an amount of liquid or powder as directed on the label of the preparation you obtain. Each manufacturer has tested his product and recommends the proper amount of it to be used. Mix the measured amount of liquid or powder with a measured amount of water as directed. Pour the mixture into an ordinary garden sprayer and apply the mixture evenly on the grass so that weeds and grass leaves are thoroughly wetted. Where only a few weeds are present in scattered areas, "spot" treatments will be found effective.

It is best not to mow the lawn for a few days following the spray treatment. If a heavy rain falls within a period of a few hours after the lawn has been treated, it may decrease the effectiveness of the spray to some extent. If a heavy rain occurs following a period of a day or two after the spray is applied, it will have little effect upon the action of the 2,4-D.

Plantain (both the broad-leaved and narrow-leaved variety), dandelions, lawn pennywort, Indian strawberry, annual morning glory, daisy, heal-all, chickweed, Japanese honeysuckle, winter cress, and curled dock sprayed with 2,4-D become curled and twisted within a few days after treatment. The weeds generally die within a period of 3 weeks after they are sprayed. If cold weather prevails, they may live for a longer period. Some perennial weeds are not killed by 2,4-D; blue grass, fescue, red top and most other lawn and pasture grasses are not injured.

2,4-D is not considered poisonous to animals or man. It does not corrode spray equipment; however, extreme care must be taken to remove all traces of 2,4-D from the sprayer before using it to spray garden crops.

Precautions

Bent grass and many garden plants such as tomatoes, squash, beans, peas, and lettuce are injured by 2,4-D. Also ornamental plants such as forsythia and young rosebushes may be injured by 2,4-D. In treating lawns bordered by ornamentals, or weeds near a garden, care must be taken that the mist from the 2,4-D spray does not settle on these plants.

Since most garden plants are extremely sensitive to 2,4-D, garden sprayers that have contained 2,4-D must be washed very thoroughly before they can be used for spraying insecticides on garden or ornamental plants. A solution of metaphosphate (a widely used water softener), used at the rate of 1 pound to 50 gallons of water (1 oz. to 3 gal.), is effective in removing 2,4-D. Rinse out the tank and pump the solution through the hose and nozzle.

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