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# virginia home food production

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## FACT SHEET

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### CULTIVATION TIPS

Weeds can rob growing plants of needed nutrients and water and thereby slow growth. In home gardens that are not mulched, cultivation is the primary method for control of weeds. Cultivation also loosens soils, improving aeration and breaks soil crusts.

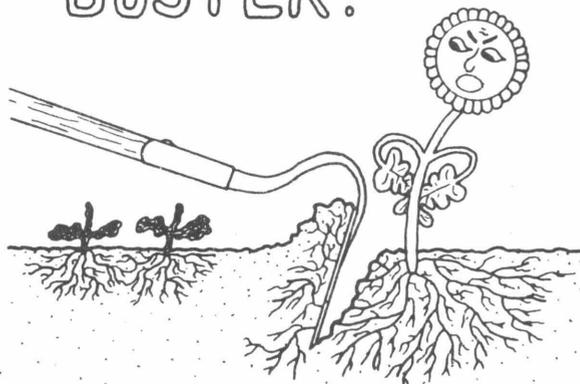
You may use hand tools such as a hand fork, trowel, hoe, metal rake, or wheel hoe. You may also use machines such as a rotary tiller or small tractor with cultivator tines.

1. Cultivate as soon as weeds appear. Do not allow them to take over the garden.
2. Avoid damaging roots of your crop. Shallow cultivation 1/4 - 1/2" is usually effective. Use shallow, scraping motions with a hoe rather than deep, chopping cuts into the soil.
3. Hand pull weeds that are in the row close to plants. Pull up roots and all of

weeds, being careful not to disturb the roots of your crop.

4. Remove any persistent weeds such as purslane, Johnson-grass, Crabgrass, and Bermuda grass out of the garden to prevent them from rooting again. Also remove any weeds that are close to flowering and going to seed. These seeds, if allowed to fall on the soil, will continue to germinate over many years.

WATCH IT,  
BUSTER!



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