



# "The Virginia Weeder"

MR-VW16

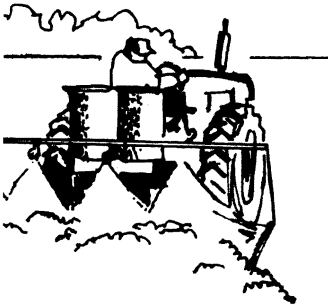
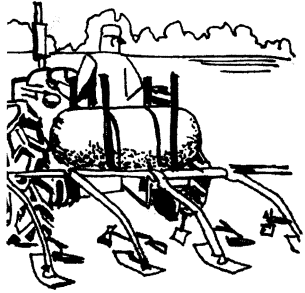
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## CONTROL OF POISON IVY

J. S. Coartney and A. H. Kates

Each year many people learn a very painful lesson in plant identification by touching poison ivy or poison oak. If you learn to identify poison ivy, you can avoid it or apply measures for its control.

Poison ivy and poison oak come in a variety of sizes and shapes which leads to confusion in identification. The stems may be trailing or climbing vines or erect growing shrubs depending upon the environment where the plants are growing. The leaf shapes range from smooth to toothed or lobed (See photographs). Most leaves have surfaces which are shiny and without hairs. Some experts divide the various types of poison ivy and oak into 7 different species, others into 3 or 4 species, and some experts regard it all as one species with many different types. Regardless of what you call it, it still causes the



Leaf forms of poison ivy and poison oak.

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same discomfort to susceptible individuals. The important thing to remember is that poison ivy or oak has its leaflets in groups of threes. Virginia creeper is often confused with poison ivy. However, Virginia creeper has leaflets in groups of fives and is not poisonous.

Poisoning is caused by a substance called urushiol, which is present in all parts of the plant. It is released from the plant by bruising. Actual contact with the poisonous principle is required to produce dermatitis. Contact with the poisonous principle may occur without actually touching the plant. It may occur by burning plants, handling contaminated clothing or pets which have been in contact with poison ivy. Plants that have been dead as long as one year still retain the ability to poison.

Not all individuals are susceptible to poisoning, and susceptible individuals vary in sensitivity. Death has occurred in extreme cases. Apparent immunity may be lack of exposure to the plants. Immunity may also change as individuals considered immune have later been poisoned.

### CONTROL

Hand removal: This is risky for sensitive individuals but may be performed by those who are immune. Wear protective clothing and rubber gloves. Wash thoroughly as soon as possible after contact with the plant. Contaminated clothing should be washed before wearing again. If the poison ivy is growing among desirable plants, hand removal is the most effective method of control.

### Herbicidal control:

Amitrole (Amino triazole) is very effective when applied as a wetting spray after the leaves have emerged in the spring or summer. Do not contact desirable ornamentals or lawn grasses with amitrole or injury may occur.

AMS (Ammate) can be used as a foliar spray or as a stump treatment. Prepare the spray by mixing 1 lb of AMS to 1 gal of water and then wet the actively growing foliage. Repeat treatment may be necessary. The dry material may be applied directly to cut stumps to kill underground parts and prevent regrowth. Do not contact desirable ornamentals or grass with AMS.

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### KEYS TO PROPER USE OF PESTICIDES

1. Read the label on each pesticide container before each use. Follow instructions to the letter; heed all cautions and warnings, and note precautions about residues.
2. Keep pesticides in the containers in which you bought them. Put them where children or animals cannot get to them, preferably under lock and away from food, feed, seed, or other material that may become harmful if contaminated.
3. Dispose of empty containers in the manner specified on the label. If disposal instructions are not printed on the label, burn the containers where smoke will not be a hazard, or bury them at least 18" deep in a place where water supplies will not be contaminated.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR IF SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS OCCUR DURING OR AFTER USE OF PESTICIDES.