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YARD 'N' GARDEN

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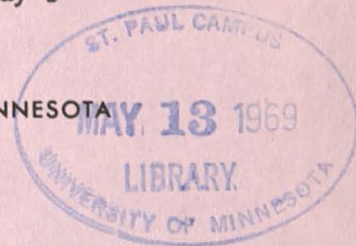


EXTENSION
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WEED CONTROL IN THE GARDEN

What is a weed? Some say it is a plant growing out of place; others define it as any unwanted plant. Whatever you call them, weeds compete with other plants in the garden for light, space, moisture and nutrients.

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The usual method of weed control is cultivation. This should be done early when weeds and plants are still small. To avoid injury to the crops being grown, cultivation must be shallow. When roots of the crop are cut off in the process of eliminating weeds, the uptake of water and nutrients is retarded. As a result, plants will often show abnormal effects of cultivation. A common example is blossom-end-rot of tomato.

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Mulches eliminate the need for cultivation and avoid the risk of root pruning. Two or three inches of ground corn cobs, clean straw, grass clippings or sawdust may be applied around the plants in late June or early July, preferably after a rain or watering. Black polyethylene film or kraft paper have also been used with good results.

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Recently a herbicide called DACTHAL has been made available in small size units for use in the home garden. DACTHAL inhibits the germination of weed seeds and won't kill weeds that are already above the ground. It's most effective if rainfall or watering occurs two or three days after application. Follow directions on the container concerning tolerant vegetable crops and rates to use on these crops.

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