



THAMES VALLEY COLLEGE  
KILOMETRE 10, SAGAMU-IKORODU ROAD, SAGAMU, OGUN STATE  
YEAR 7

METHODS OF WEEDS CONTROL  
CHARACTERISTICS AND METHODS OF WEEDS DISPERSAL

Weed is defined as a plant that grows where it is not desired in such a way that it constitutes nuisance either to man, livestock or crops.

SOME COMMON WEEDS FOUND IN FARMS INCLUDES

NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Goat weed	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>
Pig weed	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>
Elephant grass	<i>Penisetum purpureum</i>
Water leaf	<i>Talinum triangulare</i>
Tridax	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>
Mucuna	<i>Mucuna utilis</i>
Guinea grass	<i>Panicum maximum</i>
Centro	<i>Centrosema pubescens</i>
Stylo	<i>Stylosanthes gracilis</i>
Sensitive weed	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>
Calopo	<i>Calopogonium mucunoides</i>
Stubborn weed	<i>Sida acuta</i>
Giant Star grass	<i>Cynodon plectostahylum</i>
Spear grass	<i>Imperiata cylindrical</i>

CHARACTERISTICS OF WEEDS

- i. Production of large quantity of seeds
- ii. Aggressive and persistent
- iii. Efficient reproduction
- iv. **Plasticity:** possesses ability to survive under varying environmental conditions
- v. Efficient dispersal of seeds and propagules
- vi. Long seed viability and possession of regulatory mechanisms
- vii. **Precocity:** ability to grow, flower and produce seed with a very short time

viii. **Rooting system:** is efficient enabling them to withstand low soil moisture content

#### **THE METHODS OF WEEDS DISPERSAL**

- i. Dispersal of seeds by animals
- ii. Dispersal of seeds by wind
- iii. Dispersal of seeds by explosive mechanisms
- iv. Dispersal of seeds by water

#### **USES/BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF WEEDS**

- i. Some weeds are medicinal: which can be used to cure diseases of man and animals
- ii. Add organic matter to the soil when decayed
- iii. Controls erosion by covering the surface of the soil
- iv. **Serves ornamental purposes:** flowers to decorate homes and offices
- v. **Mulching:** used to regulate the soil temperature
- vi. **Green manuring:** some weeds serves this purpose

#### **HARMFUL EFFECTS OF WEEDS IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION**

- i. **Competition:** weeds competes with desirable crops for water, light, air, nutrient etc.
- ii. **Reduction of crop quality:** could mix with crop seeds during harvest
- iii. **Reduction of livestock quality:** may tear animal skin thereby reducing their market value
- iv. **Alternative host to pests:** harbours crop pests
- v. Alternative hosts to disease Organisms: harbours disease organisms
- vi. Poison to man and His livestock which could lead to death
- vii. Blocking water ways and irrigation canals
- viii. **Parasitism:** Striga are parasitic on crops and may kill them
- ix. Increase in production and harvest costs of crops

#### **Methods of weed control**

There are four major methods of controlling weeds

1. **Mechanical methods:** This involves hand pulling, handpicking, slashing with cutlasses, leaving behind the roots in the soil and through rotary cultivation which can be achieved by ploughing and burying of weeds.
2. **Cultural weed control:** This involves flooding of weeds in height of 15-30cm for about 6 weeks, burning, mulching, planting cover crops, crop rotation, tillage which exposes weeds roots and seeds, early or timely planting and close spacing planting.
3. **Biological weed control:** This involves the use of living plants and animal to control weeds. The use of suppressive plants like cover crops such as melon, and legumes like groundnut are applicable. Insect specific to a crop can also be applicable. Pasturing is also applicable by allowing ruminant animals to graze out the crops.
4. **Chemical weed control:** This involves the use of herbicides which could be applied during pre-planting operation, pre-emergence application and post emergence application which are done through sprayers.

