

Managing Weeds

Guidelines

Benefits of Weeds

Weeds & Direct Seeding



Guidelines

- Weeds are part of a healthy garden. Learn to manage them through proper crop rotation and cover cropping
- Tillage creates weed problems as well as most manures and on site compost
- It takes a few years to start reaping the benefit of no-till in regards to weed management
- Timing of weeding is critical “A stitch in time, saves nine”
- When possible weed before seedlings emerge, using care not to disturb seedlings
- Your ability to perform timely weed management should be an important factor in determining the size and type of your operation

- Critical times for weeding:

- 1) As weeds emerge and can be quickly eliminated

- 2) Before weeds have formed viable seeds (always be on the look out for this when doing other tasks)

- 3) Prior to seed scattering
When pulling or cutting weeds with developed seeds place them in separate compost piles until seeds are no longer viable



Benefits of weeds

- Increasing soil fertility
- Improves soil structure
- Protects soil from the elements
- Feeds beneficial insects
- Provides insect and disease protection



- Certain types of weeds make good cover crops when properly managed (esp in the fall, if you have not planted a cover crop & in lieu of bare soil): *chickweed*, *lambs quarters*, *purslane*, *dock*, *mullein*, *pineapple weed*, *chamomile*, *nasturtiums*, *red nettle*, *lupine*, *comfrey*, *calendula*, *wild clovers* and *vetches*



Experiment: Beneficial weeds in no-till bed without
Fava bean cover crop



Chickweed, Red Nettle, Dock



- Tillage effects weeds through:



1) soil compaction

2) disrupting water levels in soil

3) depositing weed seeds in soil

4) cutting up rhizomes and distributing them throughout area of tillage

5) tillage favors aggressive deep root species that tend to multiply with soil disruption



Weeds & small direct-seeded beds

Experiment: Did not sow seeds in a newly prepared seed bed.
Allowed 2 weeks and watered bed to encourage weed germination



Shallow hoe soil with a hula hoe or similar tool
prior to seeding





Experiment: early weeding between the rows with hand hoe

weeding around seedlings by hand when they emerge



- Gain control over weeds before establishing perennial crops or permanent cover crops in paths

Experiment:
clover
established in
path next to no-
till salad greens
bed

