UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
FARM AND HOME ADVISORS OF VENTURA COUNTY
334 BUENA VISTA STREET, VENTURA 93001
TELEPHONE 648-6131, Ext. 2284

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University of California
FARM ADVISORS SAY-

PROPER USE OF HERBICIDES ESSENTIAL

Organic chemicals used as herbicides are no more effective than the knowledge that makes use of them. Like the hoe, disc, harrow, finger weeder, and tiller, herbicides are tools. Proper use can bring clean fields, low-cost weed control, and increased food production. Improper use can bring uncontrolled weeds, decreased plant growth, and reduced yield.

Weed control is a science, not an art. Inexperienced farm labor can no longer be used effectively to chemically control weeds. Herbicides must be applied with precision, planning, and know-how to be successful.

Agricultural scientists are continually trying to increase the margin of safety for herbicides. The most conservative answers in developing the safety factor of specific herbicides can be found in soils high in sand, low in clay and organic matter. If weeds are controlled at very low rates, with no damage to crops even at high rates, in these kind of soils, herbicides stand a good chance of being commercially useful to the California plantsman.

A user of herbicides must constantly be reminded of many factors governing herbicidal activity. Weed species, percent organic matter, sand, silt, and clay, amount and kind of irrigation, method of incorporation, levels of salt, temperatures, aeration and many other factors are involved in the effectiveness of herbicides on weeds and their safety to crops. When herbicides are thoroughly tested, they are the most effective way to reduce the energy and money presently wasted on weeds.

While general recommendations are a useful starting point, each farmer

and home owner must evaluate herbicides for their own specific plant, soil, environment and cultural practices. New herbicide practices must be tested in many locations at two to three rates compared to a standard herbicide treatment in order to develop the best rate and method of use.

BUD LEE

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B. W. LEE, FARM ADVISOR
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, University of California, & County of Ventura Co-operating