

WEEDS IN HORTICULTURE CROPS IN NORTHERN TERRITORY

Reviewed by

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The total area under these crops is quite small, being just over one hundred acres mainly on areas of levee soils. Most vegetables are grown, with tomatoes being the most common. Included in this classification are citrus orchards, and bananas. Most crops are grown under irrigation during the dry, only a few crops being grown during the wet. All produce is consumed in the Northern Territory.

*Cynodon dactylon*, *Eleusine indica*, *Echinochloa crus-galli*, *Cyperus rotundus*, *Amaranthus viridus*, *Physalis minima* and *Portulaca oleracea*, are some of the major weeds, with the grasses being the most important.

Cultivation is the main weed control practice. Limited use of herbicides is being made in some situations. Chemicals such as chlorothal, paraquat, and diuron are the most used. The use of paraquat is increasing. It has proved to be an efficient knock-down spray. For example on bananas, where the weeds are allowed to grow up to 8-12 inches high before treatment and the residues allowed to remain on the surface as a mulch.

Great scope exists for the use of the various standard vegetable herbicides in the industry. The amount of research into weed control has not been very great, and is being done mainly by the Northern Territory Administration. Only occasional visits are made by herbicide company representatives. Progress has been made and there is a series of recommendations based largely on last season's trials. Trifluralin proved to be most successful for transplant tomatoes, cucumbers, transplanted cabbages and rockmelons, with benifen being promising for lettuce and diphenamide being as good on transplanted tomatoes and promising on direct seeded tomatoes.

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