

WEED CONTROL

in Sugarcane

2018

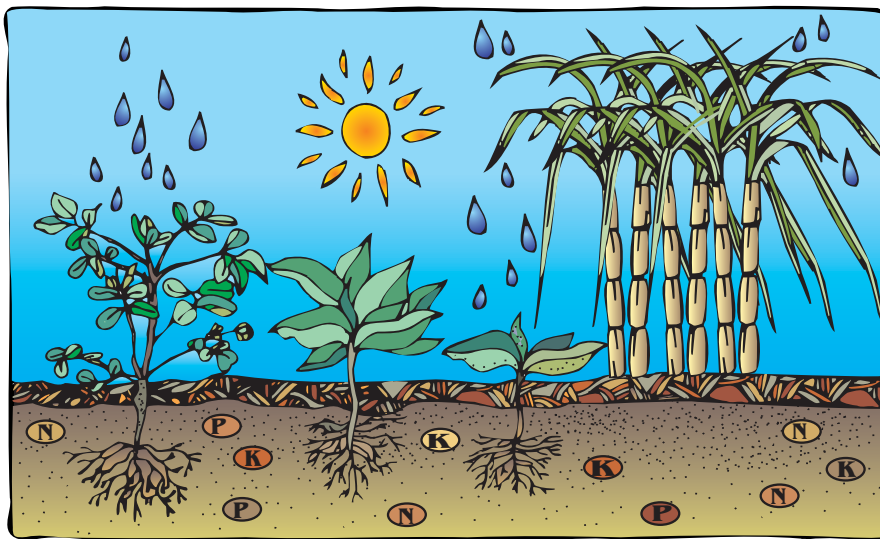
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What is a weed ?

A weed is a plant growing where it is not wanted

Why do we not want weeds ?

- Weeds compete with the crop for:
 - ◆ Sunlight
 - ◆ Water
 - ◆ Food



- Weeds cause crop yield losses
- Cane fields should be weed free for at least the first 3 months of cane growth

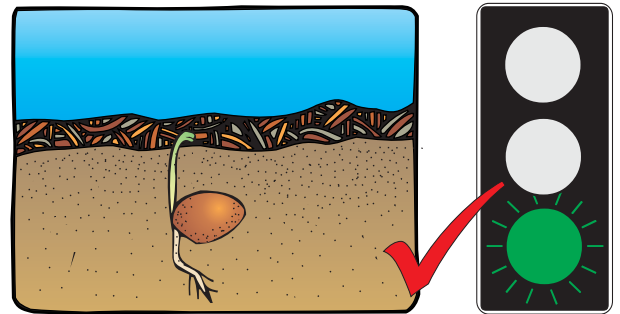
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Stages of weed growth

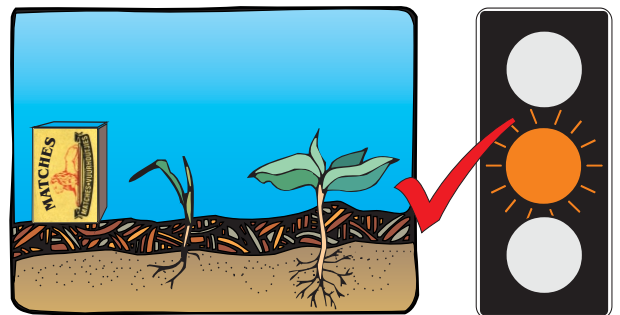
- **Pre - emergence**

- Before the weeds show through the soil



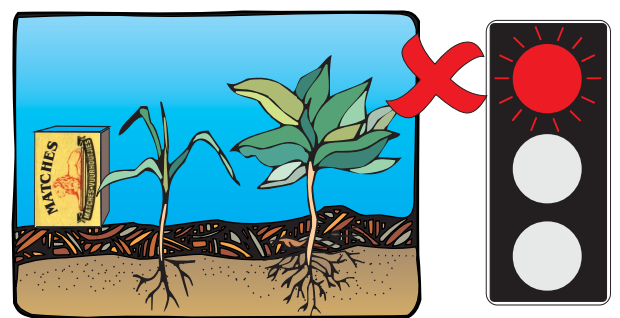
- **Early Post - emergence**

- Grasses: 1 or 2 leaves
- Broadleaf: smaller than a matchbox



- **Post - emergence**

- Grasses: 2 to 4 leaves (before tillering)
- Broadleaf: less than 10cm but before flowering



- **Late Post - emergence**

- Grasses: have tillered
- Broadleaf: taller than 10cm or have flowered

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Weed Control Methods

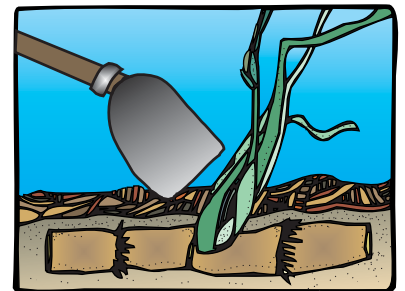
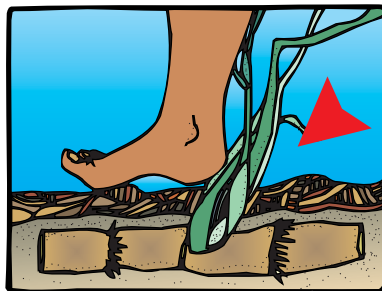
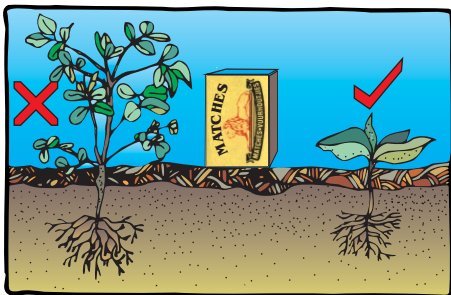
• By Hand



Hoeing may be cheaper



- Needs to be done regularly
- Needs many people
- Can be expensive if delayed
- Slow
- Weeds must not get taller than matchbox
- Can replant weeds
- Can damage cane shoots



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Weed Control Methods

• By Chemicals



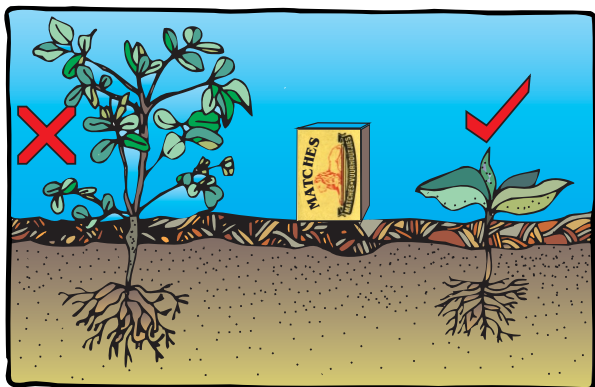
- Requires the correct chemicals
- Requires a knapsack sprayer
- Requires caution

BUT

- Lasts longer (up to 16 weeks)
- Is quicker
- Needs moist soil
- Mixing is important

Plant Crop:

Spray bare soil after planting
Use a pre-emergent herbicide



Ratoon Crop:

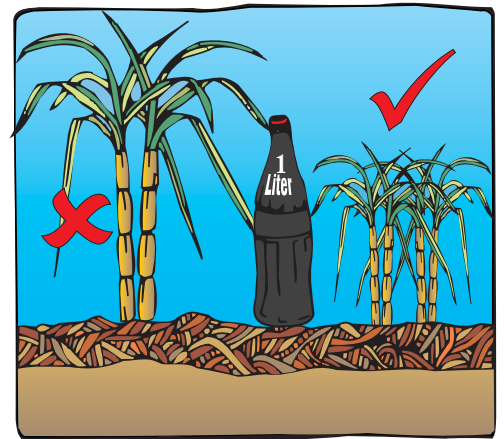
Spray soon after cutting
Weeds must not be taller than a matchbox

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Care when spraying herbicides

- Try not to spray the cane leaves
- Damage is minimized if the cane is young - smaller than a 1 litre cooldrink bottle
- If the cane is taller than 30cm, spray inter row only
- Calibrate the knapsack sprayer regularly
- Use flood jet nozzle



Storage & usage of herbicides

- Read the labels and instructions carefully
- Store chemicals in a safe place
- Use good quality water - rain water is the best
- Use protective clothing

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Symptoms of herbicide damage

- Germination failure
- Stunted growth
- Brown or yellow spots on leaves
- Deformed leaves
- Side shooting

