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Cultivation eliminates sow thistle

Sow thistle in grain fields can be controlled by thorough and timely cultivation assisted by chemical weed sprays. Control is desirable since heavy infestations considerably reduce grain and subsequent hay yields, points out W.N. Black of the Canada department of agriculture's Experimental Farm at Charlottetown.

Surface tillage after fall plowing and late spring cultivation before seeding destroy many newly established thistles. However, cultivation alone is not economically feasible for large areas that are heavily infested.

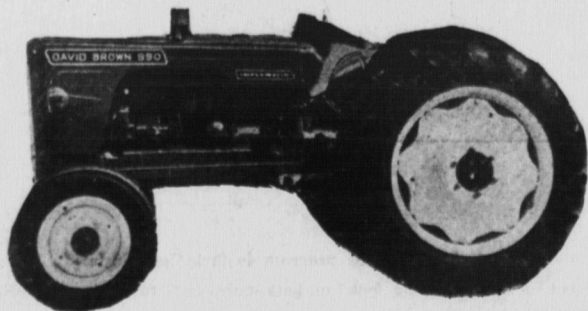
In grain fields not undersown with legumes, 2,4-D amine is effective. Applied as a spray at 8 to 12 ounces of acid equivalent per acre when the grain is from six to eight inches high, this treatment gives almost complete control of sow thistle and broad-leaved weeds such as wild radish, plantain and dandelion.

Since legumes are usually killed or severely injured by 2,4-D, when applied at a rate necessary to kill sow thistle, 2,4-DB or MCPB are recommended for undersown grain fields. Very satisfactory control is gained when either herbicide is applied at 10, 15 or 24 ounces acid equivalent per acre in 20 gallons of water. Where thistles have developed beyond the seedling stage (2-3 leaves) or heavy infestation occur, high rates prove more effective.

Neither grain nor seedlings of red clover, alfalfa or alfalfa are significantly affected by the herbicides.

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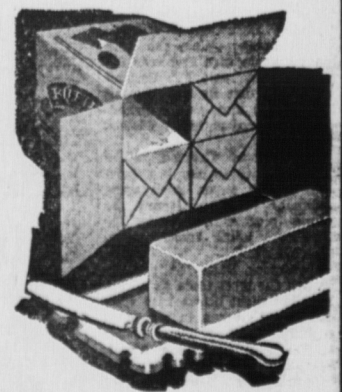


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