

**Weed Control**

by Alden S. Crafts and Wilfred W. Robbins, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, N.Y., 1962, 660 pp., \$14.75.

History of plants, evolution of weeds, principles and economics of plant control, recent advances in herbicide research, and new equipment for application, are all welded together in the third edition of *Weed Control*. Written by Dr. Alden S. Crafts and the late Dr. Wilfred W. Robbins, both of the University of California and California Experiment Station, this book should not go unused by contract applicators.

Five of the 24 chapters introduce readers to weeds as plants and give ideas of the history of this formidable adversary. Weeds were "created" by man's desire to be rid of them. Many plants regarded as weeds today were once used as food. Seeds of plants which we now consider weeds were found in the stomach of a preserved Iron Age man, for example.

Special features which the authors point out, such as rates of reproduction, method of seed

dispersal, and general hardiness, may produce a rebel from domestication such as Johnsongrass, which has caused more trouble than its original intent was worth.

After laying groundwork of control and chemical principles, the authors proceed to detail herbicides used in the battle against weed pests. Taken from a standpoint of action of herbicides rather than uses in specific crops, 11 chapters on selective and non-selective herbicides help readers better understand related compounds and methods by which they kill weeds. Each compound is treated historically from its discovery through recent research.

Relevant principles of general chemistry are fitted into the text and clearly explained so that chemical novices, too, can understand and learn. Free use is made of comparative and before-after photographs showing successes in weed control research and practice. Not a regional textbook, *Weed Control* draws information from all over the world, which gives readers a broader view of this expanding field and makes

for interesting and sometimes exotic reading.

Chapters on herbicide combinations, equipment old and new, and application techniques will no doubt give some readers fresh ideas with which they can run a weed control business more successfully.

Turfgrasses are included as crops in a 49-page chart of selective control chemicals, rates, application times, and volumes per area of spray. Likewise, charts of nonselective or soil sterilant application rates are valuable to those in industrial weed control.

Those in forest, ditchbank, railroad, or aquatic weed areas will appreciate the inclusion of remarks about these developing fields. Consideration is given whether applications are made by knapsack or airplane; the authors hope to reach a wide audience.

Appendices, complete with conversion tables, measures, weight and cost formulas, along with the recommended rate charts, make this text a valuable reference manual which a progressive weed controller should not be without.

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