

WEED CONTROL IN MAIZE



In Ethiopia, common weeds typically fall into three main categories: broad-leaved weeds (*Commelina*, *Galinsoga*, *Equisetum arvense* and *Plantago lanceolata*), grass weeds (*Eragrotis ciliaris* and *Dinebra retroflex*), and sedge weeds (*Cyperus rotundus* and parasitic purple *Striga*).

Methods of weed control in maize

Weed control in maize can be achieved using different methods, including:



Hand weeding, a common practice on traditional farms.



Inter-row cultivation using an ox-drawn Maresha (Shilshalo system) for maize planted in rows, which should be used before maize plants reach the 6-8 leaf stage.



Chemical weed control using herbicides. Herbicides available in Ethiopia: Glyphosate, Lasso, Atrazine and Gessaprim.

When is it best to start weeding?

1. When upright weeds are less than 10 centimeters tall, and creeping weeds are 10 centimeters wide.
2. Two and six weeks after maize emergence. However, the frequency of weeding will depend on the weed pressure on your farm.

Effective and timely weeding has numerous benefits, including high maize yields. With weeds out of the way, nutrients from fertilizer can be easily absorbed by the maize plant. Weeding also conserves soil moisture for crops and reduces pest and disease incidence on the crop.

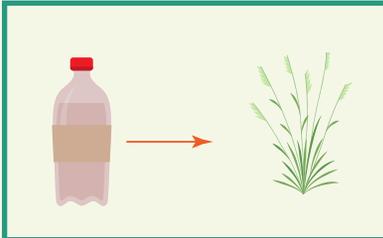
Maize yields can reduce by 40% if weeding is delayed



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Proper use of herbicides



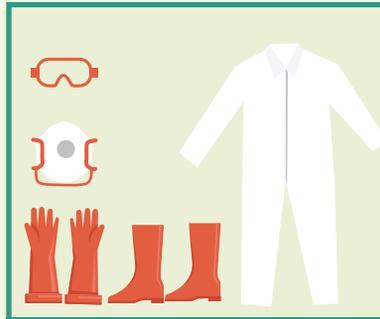
1. For effective control, choose a herbicide that is appropriate for the weed.



2. Follow application instructions to the letter. Besides being wasteful and costly, too much herbicide damages crops. Spraying too little herbicide may not have the desired effect. To avoid both scenarios, sprayers must be properly calibrated and the operator trained to spray uniformly at the same walking speed



3. Apply herbicides in warm and sunny weather; avoid windy weather, as adjacent crops can be damaged by spray drift.



4. Always wear protective clothing (gloves, rubber boots, face mask, overalls) when applying herbicides so as not to inhale the chemicals and to keep them from coming into direct contact with the skin.



5. Use the right spraying equipment and correct nozzle types, and make sure there are no leaks in the spraying equipment



6. Safely dispose or destroy herbicide containers after use; do not use them for any other purpose.



7. Do not eat, drink or smoke when applying herbicides

For further information, contact your nearest Development Agent (DA) at the Woreda Agriculture Office