

A Quik Blurb on
Weed Control in Established Gardens

Weed control in an established garden can be a major problem, especially when a substantial weed seed bank has accumulated over the years. It can be accomplished using several techniques, often in combination:

- Mulching between established plants and in foot paths between beds or rows using 3 to 4 in. of hay or straw will dramatically reduce weed pressure
- Many crops perform well when transplanted through black plastic mulch which also minimizes hand weeding; organic mulches can then be used to control weeds between these beds
- Setting aside parts of your garden for growing cover crops will improve soil quality, but should be managed to ensure weeds don't go to seed
- If weed pressure is very high it may be worth setting aside parts of your garden for repeated tillage to encourage germination of weeds; these weeds are then killed by subsequent tillage; timing is important, with June being best for most warm-season weeds
- Physical removal of weeds before they go to seed will ensure that weeding gets easier over time.
- There are many well-designed hand tools that can improve efficiency of weeding; several regional seed companies also offer a wide selection of this equipment

These are just a few techniques that can be used. Contact your county Extension office for more information on weed control techniques.

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