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# A HERBICIDE FOR NATIVE POISON PLANTS

By G. A. PEARCE

The usual method of killing poison plants is by a programme of ploughing, cropping and burning. The burning destroys a proportion of the plants and stimulates the germination of dormant seeds, which otherwise would survive in the soil for many years.

Following the initial burning and ploughing, a cereal crop will provide straw for a second fire.

With heavily infested areas it is usual to plough and sow two cereal crops in succession. Pasture species can be sown with the second crop and in this way no time is lost in developing the land.

Areas which cannot be handled by cropping and burning, such as rocky outcrops and along fence lines, can be controlled by spraying with a solution containing 2,4,5-T.

A difficulty with this type of spraying is to be able to distinguish which plants have been

treated. This can be overcome by adding diesel fuel oil to the spray solution. A suitable mixture is made by adding 2 fluid ounces of 80 per cent. 2,4,5-T to 5 fluid ounces of fuel oil. To this mixture 3 gallons of water should be added and stirred to form an emulsion.

For spraying a large area, the required quantities would be 1½ pints 80 per cent. 2,4,5-T plus 4 pints diesel fuel oil to which should be added 50 gallons of water.

Best results are obtained if the plants are sprayed just before the flowering stage, which is usually towards the end of August.

Although 2,4,5-T is not harmful to animals it should be remembered that the poison plants remain toxic after they are killed. The addition of the oil to the solution discourages stock from eating the sprayed foliage.

2,4,5-T is available from firms which distribute agricultural chemicals.

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