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1. Introduction to Weeds, Characteristics



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1.1 Introduction to weeds

1.1.1 Origin of weeds

- Weeds are no strangers to man. They have been there ever since farmer started to cultivate crops about 10,000 BC and undoubtedly recognized as a problem from the beginning. Any plant in the field other than his crop became weed.



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- In the world there are 30,000 weed species, out of these 18,000 sps cause damage to the crops.
- **Jethro Tull** first coined the term weed in 1931 in the book “**Horse Hoeing Husbandry**” Weeds are competitive and adaptable to all the adverse environments.
- It has been estimated that in general weeds cause **5%** loss to Agricultural production in most developed countries. **10%** loss in less developed countries and **25%** loss in least developed countries.



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1.1.2 Definition

- Weeds are the plants, which grow where they are not wanted (Jethro Tull, 1731).
- In 1967 the Weed Science Society of America defined a weed as “a plant growing where it is not desired” (Buchholtz, 1967).
- In 1989 the Society’s d” W.C. Muenscher 1946 “Higher plants which are a nuisance” J.L. Harper 1960



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1.2 Characteristics of weeds

- Most of the weeds especially annuals produce enormous quantity of seeds
- Weeds have the capacity to withstand adverse conditions in the field, because they can modify their seed production and growth according to the availability of moisture and temperature.
- Weed seeds remain viable for longer period without losing their viability
- Weed seeds have a tremendous capacity to disperse from one place to another through wind, water and animals including man.