



Organic Weed Control is Easy, Safe, & Effective

You want to be part of the growing movement to be kind to the environment, but you don't want to work twice as hard just to be half as effective, and settle for living with the weeds. Good news – you really can have it all: organic, safe & effective weed control. There are three basic steps in your plan:

1. **Remove adult weeds.**
2. **Get your grass healthy.**
3. **Protect against incoming weed seeds.**

With this approach, you'll have a healthy green lawn in no time, and it will stay that way. Let's get started by dealing with step one:

Weeding is the first step, and it won't be a huge task once it's done and the other two steps are in place.

Vinegar is a great natural plant killer. It will kill any plant, including your grass, so you have to use it carefully. Take a paintbrush and dip it in a container of vinegar and 'paint' the weed. Pick the right sized paintbrush that works on the weed without getting the grass. Repeat every few days, until you see that plant withering up. Don't wash off the treatment by watering right after applying. If rain washes away your work, reapply after it stops. Did you know that in the fall, dandelions send food from the leaves down to the roots? Using a vinegar treatment then, will kill the root as well as the plant.

Digging the unwanted plants out by hand is always good, if hard work. The drawbacks are trying to get all of the roots, and having made a perfect hole in your yard for new seeds to come in and fill.

Combine the two tasks. To fix the problem of getting the entire root, combine vinegar with digging. After you've dug out what you can, pour some vinegar in the hole to destroy the root. Finish by filling up the hole with topsoil. Add some grass seed only if you're not doing Step 3 in the next 6 weeks (more on that later).

Healthy grass fights off weeds on its own. There are simple ways to get your turf in good shape. The stronger and healthier it is, the better able it is to fight off intruding plants by itself.

Mowing Height: By keeping your grass at 2 to 3 inches high it will provide shade for its own root system. The bonus is, it also blocks out light, and weed seeds can't grow without sunshine. The key here is to only cut on

third of the grass at any one time. More than that weakens the grass. The perfect solution is to set your mower blades at 2 inches, and cut when the lawn is 3 inches high.

Tips for mowing: - Change the direction every mow; up and down versus back and forth. This keeps the grass from having the wheels hit them in the same place every time.

-Keep your lawn mower blades sharp and they'll cut clean. Dull blades just tear the grass and damage it.

Watering Smart: Watering every day is bad as the roots never learn to grow down to look for water. Watering less often, and more deeply, teaches the turf to reach for moisture. With a far reaching root system, there's less room for other plants to move in.

Watering tip: Measure how much you're watering by placing empty cans around. When the water level in the cans is an inch high, you're done.

Care For The Earth: Don't just look after the grass, look after the soil too. With proper feeding, aeration, dethatching, and PH balancing, you'll have the perfect ground to nurture a healthy lawn.

Aerating tip: If you plan on step 3, do NOT do core aeration for 6 weeks.

Protect against incoming weed seeds. There's a term for this; preemergent herbicide. What it does is stop the weeds before they start. It works by killing them as the plant emerges from the seed. Here is where people seem to think they have to resort to chemicals and poisons! This is odd, because over 20 years ago, Dr. Nick Christians of Iowa State University discovered a natural preemergent. He found that a by-product of corn processing, called Corn Gluten Meal, stopped seeds by drying up the root as it started to grow.

Corn Gluten Meal: Organic & Safe. Not only is it a food by-product, its other major use is as a food source for pets, livestock & fish. Being safe enough to eat means it is safe enough for your yard, and all that use it. No more waiting for days after putting down chemicals until its 'safe' enough to walk on.

When To Apply. First, know your weeds. Crabgrass sprouts in late spring to early summer. Dandelions are spring and fall. Knowing when they are going to start to grow is the time to apply. This will work on crabgrass, dandelion, and lambsquarter, to creeping bentgrass, smartweed, redroot pigweed, purslane, foxtail, barnyard grass and Bermuda grass. It works on grass seed too, so don't waste time reseeding (remember the warning from Step 1 Weeding?).

Tips for timing: Spring application time is signalled by the forsythia blooming. In fall, after the heat of summer is gone, usually Aug 15th to Sep 15th.

How To Apply. Since this is not a chemical that will hurt your yard if you don't spread it perfectly, you can use a spreader if you have one, or do it by hand. Take your pick of what works best for you. Spring or fall you'll use 10 to 20 lbs of Corn Gluten Meal to 1000 square feet. Use the larger amount if this is your first time using, less if you've used it on the yard before.

Watering: If you don't have any rain within 5 days, give your yard about a ¼ inch of water. You want to have enough water to activate it. After that, let the surface dry. Remember, this works by drying out the new root, and too much water will give the weed root a chance to recover.

Reminder: Watering more deeply but less often, like we talked about before, trains your grass to dig deep for water. Letting the surface dry won't hurt it, as the grass will now be drought resistant.

Effective for 5 to 6 weeks. This preemergent herbicide will continue to work for up to 6 weeks! Don't forget it works on grass seed too: wait at least 6 weeks before filling in bare spots or overseeding. The good news is as new seeds blow in across your yard, the weed killer will still be working.

Don't Poke Holes. The corn gluten meal acts as a blanket of protection wherever you've applied it. Digging out weeds, or core aerating will leave a hole for invading plants to move in. Do cut down yellow dandelion flowers before they go to seed, just wait 6 weeks before poking any holes in your blanket to dig them out.

Fertilize? You already have! This product is a true weed and feed, which shouldn't come as a surprise since it comes from corn, and is also used to feed animals & fish. By weight, it is 9 to 10% Nitrogen, and your grass will be fed by the slow release of this for 3 to 4 months. Not only do you not have to fertilize now, you shouldn't add any more Nitrogen.

Corn Meal Gluten is the best choice of any preemergent herbicide.

- Organic, food byproduct that's safe for people, pets, wildlife, and the environment.
- Effective on a wide variety of weeds, including crabgrass, dandelions, creeping bentgrass, smartweed, redroot pigweed, purslane, lambsquarter, foxtail, barnyard grass and Bermuda grass.
- Stops weeds before they start.
- Works for up to 6 weeks
- Slow releases nitrogen for up to 4 months to feed your yard.

Remember, keep the three basics of organic weed control in mind all year round to get the yard you want safely, effectively, and without any more work than using chemicals.

1. **Weeding:** Vinegar will kill all plants. With a paintbrush, brush onto weeds and avoid getting any on the grass. When digging out weeds, pour a little vinegar in the hole to kill of the roots, and fill in the hole with soil
2. **Keep Your Turf Strong:** Let the grass stay longer, 2 to 3 inches high, and practice good mowing technique. Give it more water, less frequently. Keep the soil healthy by aerating, dethatching, feeding, and PH balancing.
3. **Use Corn Gluten Meal:** A preemergent herbicide that when used as we've gone over, will stop weeds before they start.

You'll be paid back with a lush green turf that is naturally weed resistant without resorting to chemicals that keep you off your lawn. In fact, did you know that using a chemical preemergent will need the exact same steps? You no longer have to put up with the weeds, or harm the environment, once you follow this simple program of organic weed control.