

# Weed Management

in WESTERN NEW YORK

## Weed Research Improves Farm Profitability in Western New York

Weeds can quickly overgrow vegetable crops, thus reducing light, water, and nutrients to the crop. As a result, crop yields and quality can be greatly reduced.

Western New York is home to many large farms that grow fresh market and/or storage cabbage and green beans, green peas and sweet corn for the freezing and canning industries. Weed control is often more difficult in large fields because it is too costly for hand labor. Imagine hand-weeding a 50 acre cabbage field at the cost of \$100 per acre - a \$5,000 cost.

Cornell Vegetable Program Specialist Julie Kikkert and Cornell Professor Robin Bellinder teamed up on research trials in cabbage, peas, green beans and sweet corn over the past several years. The work included scouting fields to determine which weed species are most problematic and testing new herbicides and herbicide combinations to determine which ones are most effective on weeds without causing crop damage. Herbicides are also studied to know how to control certain invasive weed species in vegetable crops.

Weed management workshops conducted by the Cornell Vegetable Program for cabbage, pea, and bean growers have been a hit. Hundreds of growers throughout Western NY have increased their knowledge of weed identification, weed biology, cultivation techniques, proper herbicide selection, and proper stage of weed and crop growth for control measures. As a result, growers and crop consultants report improved weed control in their crops and better profit margins.

**“It was pretty obvious, not only what we gained in pea yield, but the ease of harvest. We will continue the weed control program we learned about at the Cornell Vegetable Program pea workshop.”**

— NY Pea Grower

**“With information we received from a meeting on pea weed management, we improved our weed control and gained \$30 - \$50 per acre.”**

— NY Pea Grower



Photo by Matt DeTurck, City Newspaper

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