



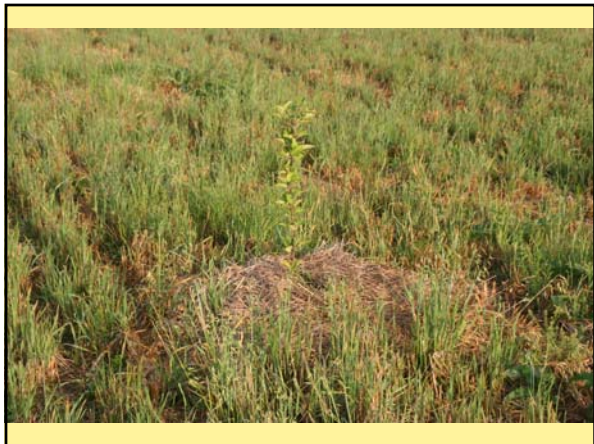
Our Weed Philosophy

- Aim for weed prevention rather than control.
 - Cover crops, crop rotations
- Holistic weed management through mechanical and cultural practices.
- Quick crops, like salad mix, never get weeded.
- Once crops are well-established, weeds become more an issue of aesthetics than competition.
- Weather and time do not always cooperate. When that happens, we call our weeds an “under-sown” cover crop!

Equipment and Tools

- 1 and 2-row tractor mounted cultivators
- Colinear hoes, ergonomically comfortable
- Harvest knives for small seeded crops like carrots
- Flame weeder, straw mulch for perennial crops like asparagus, blueberries, and apples
- Raking out perennial weeds- Bermuda grass
- Tillage- rototill to kill annual broad leaf weeds







Bed Preparation and Planting



- Tillage for weed seed germination followed by light tillage for bed preparation
 - This works best when the initial tillage is followed by a light rain
- Use a tractor-mounted bed-shaper
 - Bolts along the back frame make rows for the walk-behind Planet Jr. push seeder to follow
 - Straight rows help with cultivation later on
- Mechanical transplanter to create straight rows





Irrigation

- Drip irrigation waters only the crops, not the entire bed, helping prevent weed growth.
- A lay-flat oval hose main line can be driven over by the tractor tires when cultivating.



Cover Crops

- Cover crops as smother crops
 - very effective for eliminating bermuda grass and preventing annual broadleaf germination
- Oats/Peas for winter
 - Sown in September, winter kills
 - Grows quickly, easy to incorporate in spring
- Millet and/or cow peas for summer
 - Sown in July, ready to incorporate in approx. 40 days
 - Drought and heat tolerant, quick growing, high volume of biomass





Crop Rotations

- We divide our field into 2 equal parts – 1 for spring crops and 1 for summer crops. Each year we rotate these two fields. This prevents weeds from getting established.
 - spring versus summer weeds
- The Cycle:
 - spring cash crop (lettuce, broccoli, etc.) → summer cover crop (millet) → winter cover crop (oats/peas) →
 - summer cash crop (tomatoes, peppers, etc.) → winter cover crop (oats/peas) → spring cash crop (lettuce, broccoli, etc.)

Learning From Our Mistakes

- Row cover as a breeding ground for weeds.
- Wheat straw mulch-suffocated our strawberries.
- Winter rye and cold-hardy oats for cover crops- difficult to kill in the spring.

