

Responsible 'Control' of Pests and Weeds

Responsible 'control' of pests and weeds requires:

New Attitudes and Values

- Earth is my home
- I'm part of Nature
- Environmental Relationships are benign
- There are no enemies, only indicators of problems in design and management
- I need to respond to these, not eliminate 'enemies'

For this I require

- A high level of awareness
- Acting in present vs past
- A clear vision of a benign world of which I am part
- Information and skills
- Institutional supports (products, services, education, models, research, legislation)

New Designs

- Aim to meet all long-term needs of plants – match the needs of plants to site, avoid stressing plants
- Use hardy, resistant, locally adapted varieties – save your own seed (non-hybrids)
- Remember all plants serve multiple functions
- Build structural complexity and species diversity into the design
- Use companion plants
- Rotate crops
- Build up and protect the soil, add organic materials, keep mulched
- Remember that every situation is unique – there is no universally applicable master design (beware of such claims)
- Trust your own thinking

New Management Procedures

- Learn about plants, insects and other animals
- Spend time observing your garden /farm
- Imitate and support natural processes and designs, recycle organic materials, avoid poisons
- Monitor for problems
- Look and respond to causes
- Be suspicious of solutions that are based on single, simple, high powered, imported, technology-intensive, chemical, direct approaches. They usually have harmful side-effects, are temporary and are attractive because, by appearing to solve the problem quickly, they make you feel powerful.
- Consider instead indirect, multifaceted, long-term, low powered, knowledge and skill intensive, bioecological solutions based on local resources. These tend to be permanent and have secondary benefits.
- Remember, every situation is unique. There are no universally applicable master design (beware of such claims)
- Trust your own thinking.