

Progress Report on the Use of Paraquat in the Greenhouse

A series of tests were conducted recently to determine if Paraquat could be used as a contact weed killer in the greenhouse. This work was carried on in cooperation with Enomoto and Company and Kitagawa Nursery, Redwood City, and Podesta Nursery, Half Moon Bay. Here is a progress report on the procedures and results:

A total of 34 different types of potted tropical foliage and blooming plants were placed in the test greenhouses. Weeds between and under the benches were sprayed with Paraquat at the rate of 1 pound per acre plus X-77 wetting agent at 1 quart per 100 gallons of water. The spray mixture was applied at low pressure (about 10 to 15 pounds) so as to avoid drift to desirable plants.

Weed kill was excellent and no injury was observed on any of the tropical foliage or blooming plants in the experiments. This is in spite of the fact that the greenhouse ventilators were closed, steam lines were sprayed with the Paraquat solution, and steam heat turned on immediately after treatment.

The application of Paraquat in the greenhouse is still in the experimental stage and package labels do not yet recommend this usage. Paraquat has a high mammalian toxicity. Label instructions relative to precautions necessary in handling and using should be followed closely.

Clyde Elmore, Extension Weed Control Technologist
Marvin Davis and R. H. Sciaroni, Farm Advisors