SUBJECT: AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE

CLASS: SS2

TOPIC: WEEDS AND WEED CONTORL

TERM: 3RD TERM

WEEK: 2

MEANING OF WEEDS

Weeds are uncultivated plants growing where they are not wanted, thereby constituting nuisance either to man, livestock or crops.

CLASSIFICATION OF WEEDS

Weeds include grasses, legumes and other plants:

1. ANNUAL WEEDS

These are a weed that complete their life cycle within a season or a year and also propagates by seeds. Examples are lambs quarters, chickweed, etc.

2. BIENNIAL WEEDS

These are weeds that complete their life cycle within two years. They may propagate either by seeds or vegetative parts or by both. Examples bull thistle.

3. PERENNIAL WEEDS

These are the ones that live for three or more years and produce seeds more than once in their life cycle. Examples are bindweed, sorrel, leafy spurge,etc.

SOME COMMON WEEDS

1.	COMMON NAME	BOTANCAL NAME
2.	Elephant grass	Penisetum purpureum
3.	Broom acuta	Sida acuta
4.	Siam weed	Chromolaena odorata
5.	Water leaf	Talinum triangulare
6.	Guinea grass	Panicum maximum
7.	Star bur	Acanthospermum hispidum
8.	Tridax	Tridax procumben
9.	desmodium	Desmodium spp
10.	Carpet grass	Axonopus compressus
11.	Pig weed	Boerhevia diffusa
12.	Spear grass	Imperata cylindrical

13.	Milk weed	Euphobia hinta
14.	Bush marigold	Aspilia Africana

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF WEEDS

1. Some weeds serve as food for livestock and man
2. Some weeds have medicinal value and used to treat human diseases.
3. Some weeds serve ornamental purpose.
4. Weeds help in maintaining oxygen and carbon-dioxide balance
5. Weeds helps as mulching materials
6. Weeds help in soil fertility replacement (nitrogen fixation)
7. Weeds serves as means of controlling erosion, especially cover crops.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WEEDS

1. Some weeds are harmful to humans, animals and crops.
2. Weeds grow rapidly and occupy extensive areas
3. Many weeds have the ability to produce large quantities of seeds i.e. they have high reproductive capacity.
4. Seeds of many weeds species exhibit various forms of dormancy.
5. Weeds have adaptations for short and long distance dispersal
6. Weeds have a wide range of modified parts (leaves, stems, roots, seeds etc.)
7. Weeds have vigorous vegetative reproduction or regeneration from fragments.

AGRICULTURAL EFFECTS OF WEEDS

1. Weeds provides vegetative cover that protects the soil surface against erosion
2. Weeds add organic matter to the soil.
3. Some plants referred to as weeds used as herbs.
4. Weeds play important roles as sources of medicinal drugs.
5. Weeds play an important role in nutrient recycling. Roots of weeds tap nutrients from the lower soil depth and return to the surface as litter when the weeds shed their leaves or when the entire plant died and decays.
6. Some weeds species help for beneficial insects and at the same time provide nectar for bees.
7. Some weeds species help to beautify the landscape.

HARMFUL EFFECTS OF WEEDS

1. Weeds reduce crop yield by interfering with crop growth.
2. The interference includes competition with crops for nutrients, light and water.
3. Weeds reduce the quality of harvested agricultural produce
4. Weeds interfere with harvest operations and increase cost of harvesting.
5. Some weeds may poison animals; they can be poisonous if eaten by grazing animals.
6. Weeds affect health of humans; some weeds such as stinging nettle can cause skin rashes.

METHODS OF WEEDS CONTROL

The various methods of weed control are:

Cultural method

Chemical method

Biological method

Cultural Method: cultural weed control methods entails engaging in all aspects of viable crop husbandry to minimize weeds interference with crops. These consist of hand weeding, hand pulling, slashing, tillage and practice of crop rotation.

Chemical methods: this involves the use of herbicides for controlling the interference of weeds with man, livestock and crops. It is expensive, but it is faster when compared to cultural weed control.

Biological control: this refers to the control or suppression of weeds by the action of one or more organisms, through natural means or by manipulation of the weeds, organisms, or environment.