

Weed Control Trials - by Art Delahey, CPLS Newsletter #91:6

In an ongoing effort to reduce the amount of labour and time required to keep CPLS's lily plots weed-free we did a trial application of a relatively new pre-emergent herbicide in the fall 1999.

CASORON is a granular pre-emergent chemical, developed for shelterbelt weed control, which attaches to the soil particles and kills weeds as they germinate. It is effective against such weeds as chickweed, purslane, groundsel, knotweed, lamb's quarters, mustard, pigweed,, shepherd's purse, dandelion and sow thistle. It offers partial control on other weeds including Canada thistle. The granular chemical must be applied as late as possible in the fall - about mid-October. While its action and results are very similar to Treflan, Casoron has the advantage of being less concentrated so application is somewhat simpler. It should not be used in proximity to any shallow-rooted plants as it may leach down and enter the root zone. Casoron is simply applied to the soil surface - no incorporation is required.

Stands of Bold Knight, Matchless and Coppertone were treated with Caroson in October 1999. A portion of each row was treated at the recommended rate of 11 grams of Caroson to 1 square meter (a row 12 inches wide and 11 feet long equals 1 square meter). An equal amount in each row was left untreated. In spring 2000 the lilies emerged with no noticeable difference between the treated and untreated sections. While weed growth was initially slow due to cool dry spring it later became evident that there were no weeds emerging in the treated areas. Control was complete and no weed growth developed up to publication date (September 2000). Untreated areas needed the usual chemical spraying to control heavy weed growth. It would appear that Caroson offers considerable potential for weed control in lilies.

Caution must be expressed however on two matters. First, it is imperative that steps be taken to accurately apply the recommended rate. We measured weighed amounts into a glass jar with a finely punched metal lid, and marked various amount levels on the side of the jar. This allowed for refilling without subsequent weighing of the Caroson. Second, we have not been able thus far to determine whether Caroson builds up in the soil. We know that it can be leached down so deeper roots in sandy soils could be put at jeopardy.

Caroson is available in the fall only at garden centers in 2 kg and 15 kg bages at a cost of approximately \$8.00 per kilogram. CPLS will be making a purchase and considerable applications in the coming fall!