



Rottboellia itch grass in maize

Rottboellia cochinchinensis Mulungwe in Soli and Lenje language

	Prevention	Monitoring	Direct Control	Direct Control	Restrictions
 <p>Young itch grass that needs to be weeded (photo Roed CIRAD)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant clean certified seed, this will ensure that the maize seeds to be planted are free from weed seeds. Early weed the fields to get rid of the itch grass before it flowers and produces seeds. Try to achieve itch grass free fields. Remove / control young itch grass in field-adjacent strips before the grass get seeds to avoid them from drifting into cultivated areas with wind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scout for newly emerged itch grass on a weekly basis for a period of 4 to 6 weeks from maize planting. Mainly look for the presence of the weed itself, and before it reaches flowering stage. If you see many emerging itch grasses, you may consider green direct control actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not allow weeds to grow to maturity for you to weed, it should be removed at young stages. Mechanical weeding e.g. through hand hoe weeding or draft cultivators in early weed stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, pre-harvest interval, max number of sprays, restricted re-entry interval. Do not empty into drains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No synthetic herbicides are permitted in integrated production.
 <p>Mature itch grass, an annual grassy weed that grows up to 3m high. It has spike-like flowers, up to 15 cm long (photo Chris Parker CABI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compost or bury the itch grass that was removed from the fields. Deep cultivation (deep tillage, ploughing) should be avoided as buried seeds remain alive for many years Crop rotation with non-cereal and non-grassy crops, e.g. with legumes like bean or, cow peas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you see many itch grasses emerging after maize sowing and before maize emergence you may consider chemical direct control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the weed is over grown in small fields, hand pulling is recommended or use of a hoe with precaution to avoid dispersing seeds: but this is often too late to solve the problem (wear gloves because the weed is itchy, and be careful with your face). If you cannot manage to get rid of the itch grass, you may consider yellow direct control actions the following season. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always consult recent list of registered pesticides (ZEMA). Apply trifluralin -based herbicides which are applied at pre-emergence of maize. Alternatively, apply glyphosate -based herbicides before emergence of maize. Dinitroaniline pesticide group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WHO toxicity class U (unlikely to present acute hazard in normal use). Never spray when maize has already emerged. Restricted re-entry interval (r.e.i.) 1 d. WHO class III (slightly hazardous). 1 spray only. Never spray when maize has already emerged. R.e.i. 1 d. Works only when getting into contact with weeds. Sprays on the soil do not help.

Zambia

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