

COMMENTS ON GRAZING GEESE

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(Editor's note: Along with the article from the West Virginia Conservation Magazine, Mr. Woodrum sent a letter of further explanation and comments which are given below.)

Over and above, the article material, I would like to make mention of the following observed information:

- (1) Geese weeding is practical only in, 2-0 or large 1-0 nursery stock.
- (2) I would use geese as weeders only where stock is of low stand density. (Possibly where seedbeds were of thin density due to poor germination, grub damage, previous lifting, etc.).
- (3) Geese are fairly particular about what they eat. (Will eat most grasses, plantain, chickweed, etc., which are the bulk of our pesty weed crops.) The fact that geese don't prefer to eat evergreens, winterberry, multiflora rose, indicates they are choosy about their eating.
- (4) I would not weed geese in beds of good density, as the plants themselves crowd out the weed crop.
- (5) Geese weeding does not cultivate seedbeds. Also, weeding by hand after weeding by geese takes half again as long to weed.
- (6) Geese droppings are of importance, as they improve the soil.
- (7) Some grain feed is necessary for the diet of geese. It has been noted that they will get weak on only grass diet.
- (8) Foxes are a problem with geese. Geese should be penned at night, not necessarily sheltered.
- (9) At the present, I would say that it is impractical to carry geese through the winter because of the cost of holding over.

(10) Geese-weeded seedbeds are not as pretty to look at as hand-weeded beds.
