

## Parthenium Awareness week Report (16-22 August 2024)

ICAR- National Research Center for Grapes Manjri Pune.



*Parthenium hysterophorus* (Family: Asteraceae), locally called *gajar ghas* or Congress grass, is an alien weed which entered into India along with wheat imported from USA in the early 1950s. Since then it has spread alarmingly and invaded about 35 million hectares of land throughout the country including Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep. This weed is notorious to cause many diseases like skin allergy, hay fever, breathing problems in human beings and animals besides reducing agricultural productivity loss of biodiversity. *Parthenium hysterophorus* invades disturbed land, including roadsides. It infests pastures and farmland, causing often disastrous loss of yield, as reflected in common names such as famine weed. In some areas, heavy outbreaks have been ubiquitous, affecting livestock and crop production, and human health.

This year ICAR- NRCG launched Parthenium Awareness Week on the eve of National Independence Day. Organizers of Parthenium awareness week gave detailed account of

management of this obnoxious weed by Chemical control, Biological control (Cassia tora, marigold and Zygotypha bicolorata), and utilization of this weed by Vermicomposting. An impressive exhibition depicting integrated technologies to manage obnoxious weeds. The live sample of Mexican beetle, botanicals, herbicide samples and spray equipment's used to manage this plant. Technical bulletins in Hindi on management of Parthenium, Lantana were also distributed to the participants.

### Following activities are carried out at ICAR- NRCG Pune

#### 1) Awareness through poster display

Organizers of Parthenium awareness week gave detailed account of management of this obnoxious weed by chemical control, biological control, mechanical and manual. Related posters were displayed in the campus.



#### 2) Parthenium awareness through group discussion

Parthenium awareness programme was organized at two places in the institute campus one at Bower plot and second programme organized at A1 block at NRC Grapes. The programmes

were organized in collaboration with NRCG staff at both the places. The gatherings were made aware about the environment damage by the weeds causing through showing documentary on Parthenium, posters and specimens related to the weed. The programme was well appreciated at both the places and a two way conversation happened during question answer session.



**3) Fallowing Demonstration was conducted to understand and the tactics of Parthenium control.**

**a) Actual uprooting and collection of Parthenium weed from field**

The office staff of the NRCG appreciated the efforts of scientists of the NRCG to aware about this weed. An exhibition depicting harmful effects and technology to manage this obnoxious weed was also displayed and practical demonstration on uprooting of this weed was also given on this occasion. The infestation of the weed has been low and scanty in the village. The immediate step will ensure to eradicate the problem.



**b) Awareness for Parthenium weed management through Biological control**

An exhibition depicting integrated technologies to manage obnoxious weeds, the live sample of Mexican beetle, botanicals used to manage this weed. Technical bulletins in Hindi on management of Parthenium, Lantana and Ageratum were also distributed to the participant. Mexican beetle used for control Parthenium.





**c) Awareness through Chemical Spraying:**



In ICAR- NRCG farm, the spray equipment's and Glyphosate is used for manage this weed. All the staff were presented during herbicide application.

In the event of closing of the Parthenium Awareness Week on August 22, 2024 staff of ICAR – NRCG Pune celebrated Parthenium Awareness Week by arranging power point presentation.

**Conclusion:**

All the above activities were carried out at ICAR-NRC for Grapes campus as a part of “Parthenium Awareness’ Week” program. These activities were involved for making the campus Parthenium free, including biological control agents and chemicals treatments. Public awareness was provided to identify Parthenium, knowledge of its impacts, its management and the potential for weed seed spread. Awareness campaigns were done at NRC campus areas at risk of invasion so they can recognize Parthenium and help prevent its spread.