

## RESEARCH NOTES

### CONTROL OF HARSH GRASSES IN PASTURELANDS

Our pasturelands in Puerto Rico are often invaded by tall and undesirable bunchy grasses. The following can be mentioned among them: "Cortadera" (*Paspalum millegrana*) Schard., "matojo blanco" (*Paspalum virgatum*) L., "gramalote" (*Panicum maximum*) Jacq., and "matojo de burro" (*Sporobolus indicus*) L. These grasses are either unpalatable to the cattle or they are eaten by them only a short time when in a succulent and tender stage. This, and the fact that most of them produce abundant viable seed insure their prompt and widespread establishment in pastures. Sometimes the degree of infestation in some localities is so high that they occupy sites to the almost complete exclusion of desirable species. Establishment of any one of the undesirable pasture grasses results in a reduction of the grazing area, thus reducing its carrying capacity. In addition, the farmer faces the costly problem of eradicating them from the pastures. Currently, this is performed by digging them out with a mattock. Unfortunately, if pieces of stems and roots remain in the soil after the digging they grow back again and reestablish themselves in a few weeks or months, depending on the weather.

A chemical method of effectively eradicating these intruding grasses has been developed at the Station. This method consists of cutting an individual clump back to the ground. After this has been done a handful of either chlorea or ureabor should be distributed over the spot. An alternate treatment is to dissolve 4-6 pounds of chlorea in a 5-gallon knapsack sprayer and spray the clump thoroughly using a cone-shaped nozzle. It should be stated that these control measures are probably most effective economically if the previously mentioned grasses are established only in spotty areas, or are individually scattered over the field.

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