



Super Sponge® Operating Instructions

The SUPER SPONGE® Weed Wiper is a very effective contact herbicide applicator usually used to apply non-selective herbicides to weeds growing above crops. Proper set-up, adjustment, operation, and maintenance are essential to assure effective weed control while protecting the crop from damage.

The SUPER SPONGE® utilizes a gravity feed system. The tank should be mounted approximately 36" above the sponge. The drip manifold should be 6" – 12" below the tank. The low pressure feed system is sensitive to kinks in the airlines and air locks. When properly set up, the feed system will vent itself and feed smoothly. Operators should beware and air locks in the lines.

Starting Out

Check for even feeding (before filling the tank with chemicals)

Thoroughly wet the sponges with a water hose and squeeze them to work out any dry spots.

Before filling the tank with chemicals, fill the tank with water and open the drip valves to medium stream. Let them run for several minutes. Watch for even dripping from the sponges about every six inches along the full length of the wiper. Unlike a conventional sprayer, you cannot see plugged nozzles on a wiper during operation. Always check for uniform feeding before heading out to the field.

When an even feed is attained, drain the tank by removing the ½" vinyl tubing from the screen outlet. Squeeze the excess water from the sponges. Fill the tank with chemical solution, and turn on the chemical flow. When the sponges begin dripping again, they should be saturated with the chemical solution. Turn down the drip valves to a rapid drip. Liquid does not necessarily have to collect in the bottoms of the sight glasses. If liquid does collect in the sight glasses, be sure to keep it below the fill lines. Close the master valve and head for the field.

Field Adjustments

Adjust the height of the sponges to just above crop level. Contact as much of the weed as possible without contacting the crop.

Turn on the master, or remote valve and begin wiping at 5-7 mph. Gradually turn down the drip valves to the point where excess chemical drip has just stopped. Some operators set the drip valves fairly heavy, then turn off the master valve to reduce dripping. They wipe a distance, then turn the master valve on again to re-saturate the sponges.

While unfamiliar with adjusting the chemical flow, it is usually better to set the wiper too wet and have a little dripping than to set it too dry and have a poor weed kill.



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MIXING

DO NOT USE A STICKER OR STICKER-SPREADER!

Sticky, oily spreaders plug the feed system and gum up the sponges. A watery-type wetter or surfactant can be used.

The ratio of herbicide to water can vary, depending on the weeds to be controlled, the time of year, and the temperature. Contact your chemical fieldman or extension service for the best herbicide mix for specific weed and crop conditions.

DO NOT USE WETTABLE POWDERS OR SUSPENSION CHEMICALS!

We encourage you to avoid the use of Goal herbicide because of reported compatibility problems with the herbicide and our plastic fittings and tubing.

Always follow herbicide label instructions and heed the warnings. Handle chemicals and application equipment responsibly.

MAINTENANCE

At the beginning of the season, be sure to check the feed system for proper feeding. If a section of the drip tube is plugged, it can be blown out by air or cleaned by pulling the wet sponges to the side to expose the black drip tube. Along the top of the tubes are laser-cut holes at 60° angles, approximately every 6". They may look like little slits. The holes can be re-opened using a fine wire or small sewing needle. If new holes are needed, heat the needle with a match or burner and open new holes at an angle. Opening holes too large or making too many holes will reduce the back pressure and interfere with the uniform feeding on side-hill conditions.

The protective netting over the sponges is replaceable and is much cheaper to replace than the sponges. When the nets begin to tear or wear out, mend or replace them before the cellulose sponges are damaged.

It is advisable to flush the system with water after use. Do not store the system over the off-season with chemical in the lines. A film will form on the tubing and can plug the small feed holes. To avoid this, be sure to flush the system thoroughly with water at the end of the season. It is also advisable to spray the sponges with water to remove chemicals that can cause the sponges to harden excessively.

At the end of the season, the SUPER SPONGE® should be stored in a dry place, out of direct sunlight.