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ELECTRICAL WEED CONTROL

SUSTAINABLE • EFFICIENT • VERSATILE • SAFEGUARDED

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Why there is a need for alternatives

- ≡ Putting health and environmental concerns aside, there are two key drivers for the use of alternatives:
 1. Weeds are becoming **increasingly resistant** to chemicals
 2. **Regulators are increasingly banning or restricting** the use of herbicides
 - There are **already some restrictions** in place, e.g. near water or in SSSIs
 - The license for glyphosate was only **temporarily extended** for 18 months; there is still a risk that it might be **unavailable from 2018** onwards
 - As part of the extension, the EU Commission made it clear that you have responsibility to ‘**minimise the use of the substance in public parks, public playgrounds and gardens**’

The different alternative methods available

Electricity



Electricity boils weeds from tip to root without damaging surrounding plants or soil

Hand-weeder only

Ideal for parks and gardens

Hot Foam



Hot water treats weeds whilst foam help retain heat for longer

Hand-weeder only

Ideal for urban areas

Hot Water



Hot water treats weeds

Hand-weeder and utility mounted automated version

Ideal for urban areas

Electricity compared to chemicals

- ≡ Not included foam and hot water in comparison in published version as subjective view from Ubiquetek

Comparison	Chemicals	Electricity
Systemic kill of growth and control centres	✓	✓
Tap-root, vascular, rhizome, deep-rooted & woody weeds	Different chemicals	✓
Low running costs (exc. labour)		✓
No consumables other than fuel		✓
Lasts all day without refilling		✓
Fits onto a small utility vehicle	✓	✓
Can immediately return to area for grazing & use		✓
Immediately visible		✓
Suitable for use near water & in SSIs		✓

Need for industry support

- ≡ There's no denying that **herbicides are under pressure**, and glyphosate could potentially be unavailable from 2018 onwards
- ≡ Although not a silver bullet, **alternatives should be part of the overall solution** as they are a perfectly viable solution in a number of scenarios
- ≡ Main criticisms of alternatives are time and cost
 - = **Time**: True for clearance but spot-weeding times are comparable; some alternatives do not need any time for consumable preparation & storage
 - = **Cost**: Due to the high consumable cost of chemicals and regulatory controls required, some alternatives can be comparable over a period of time. For example, electrical methods have a very low running cost (just the cost of running a generator) and the purchase price is such that when purchased with financing, the cost of ownership is arguably inline with the cost of regularly using a knapsack
- ≡ However, given the pressure herbicides are under, **time and cost are no longer the only considerations**, and in some cases not the most important
- ≡ With the support of the industry and as volumes increase, the alternatives will be able to **drive down costs** even more and develop new more automated products