

Maintain the growth of crops or plants

Overview

This standard is for those who maintain the growth of crops or plants both outdoors and in protected conditions.

This includes maintaining crops or plants in any horticulture setting, whether amenity (green roofs, gardens, sports turf, etc.) or production (fruit, vegetables, flowers, trees, etc.).

You will carry out your work in accordance with instructions and specifications.

If you are working with chemicals or machinery you should be trained and hold current certification where required in line with relevant legislation.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with the activity to be carried out
2. confirm that suitable clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn
3. carry out an environmental assessment of the site before starting work
4. carry out all work in accordance with instructions and specifications
5. confirm that the equipment required to maintain the growth of crops or plants is prepared, used and maintained safely and correctly
6. monitor the health and development of the crops or plants in accordance with specifications
7. take required action to optimise the growth of crops or plants
8. recognise problems with the crop or plant, or environmental conditions, and take the required action
9. maintain crop or plant development in accordance with specifications
10. monitor and maintain the integrity of the site in accordance with specifications, including irrigation and drainage where appropriate
11. recognise weeds, pests and diseases and take required action
12. handle crops or plants in a manner which prevents damage
13. maintain hygiene and biosecurity whilst maintaining crops or plants in accordance with instructions
14. carry out work in a manner which causes minimal damage to the surrounding area
15. confirm that waste safely and correctly disposed of or recycled in accordance with relevant legal requirements and organisational policies
16. confirm records are completed as required by the organisation
17. confirm that work is carried out in accordance with relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, codes of practice and organisational policies

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks when maintaining the growth of crops or plants
2. the type of clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) suitable for the activity
3. the importance of carrying out an environmental assessment of the site before starting work and the findings which must be reported
4. how to prepare, use and maintain the required equipment safely and correctly
5. the stages of crop or plant growth
6. methods for maintaining and optimising crop or plant development
7. the impact of the growing medium on crop or plant health
8. problems that may arise with development of crops or plants and the required action to take
9. indications that environmental conditions require adjustment and the action to take
10. how to recognise weeds, pests and diseases and the action to take
11. methods of supplying water to crops or plants
12. how to check and adjust irrigation and drainage systems to meet specifications
13. methods of providing nutrients to crops or plants
14. the importance of following specifications when providing nutrients to crops or plants
15. types of unwanted plant material and why they must be removed
16. when crops or plants require protection
17. the importance of completing the activity in accordance with specifications
18. the importance of maintaining hygiene and biosecurity when maintaining the growth of crops or plants
19. how to handle, transport and dispose of/recycle waste in accordance with relevant legal and organisational requirements
20. the records that need to be kept and the importance of completing them
21. the importance of following environmental and ecological best practice to help minimise the impact of your work on the environment

22. your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, codes of practice and organisational policies

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Scope/range

A. Use the following methods to maintain the development of crops or plants:

1. protection from pests and diseases
2. weed control measures
3. weather protection
4. control of temperature, humidity, ventilation, light and shade
5. pruning and trimming
6. supporting
7. nutrient provision
8. provision of water

B. recognise and remove the following unwanted plant material:

1. damaged crops or plants
2. weeds
3. crop debris
4. diseased materials

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Glossary

Control measures:

- mechanical
- chemical
- cultural

Crops or plants:

- herbaceous perennials
- sedums
- arable crops
- crops for human consumption (e.g. strawberries, mushrooms, vines)
- plants for sale or propagation

Instructions: verbal or written.

Specifications: drawings, schedules, method statements, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), manufacturers' guidelines, customer requirements, organisational policies

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