

# Roundup Alternatives

Written By : Terry Turner

Roundup alternatives without glyphosate are available and can be effective. Organic brand options use naturally occurring oils or acids, and some alternatives can even be made with household ingredients. Farmers may find it easier to use different herbicides or farming methods.

Interest in alternatives to Roundup has grown quickly since concerns emerged over the herbicide's safety. Its active ingredient, glyphosate, is branded as a probable cause of cancer by the United Nation's International Agency for Research on Cancer. But regulators in the United States have said glyphosate does not pose a risk to people's health or the environment.

At the same time, more than 13,000 Roundup lawsuits claiming the pesticide caused non-Hodgkin lymphoma or other cancers have been filed in courts around the United States.

Everyday consumers may be in a better position than farmers to adopt alternatives to Roundup. Large farms or landscaping operations may have a harder – and more expensive – time giving up glyphosate-based herbicides.

## Roundup Alternatives for Your Lawn and Garden

### 6 Alternatives to Roundup for Around the Home



Mulch



Herbicidal soaps



Corn gluten meal



Industrial vinegar



Iron-based herbicides



Manually removing weeds

 ConsumerNotice.org

Putting down a 2- to 3-inch layer of mulch will cut off the sunlight weeds need to sprout. Any weeds that manage to germinate will suffocate under the weight of the mulch.

A handful of iron-based weed killers have been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. Broadleaf weeds absorb iron more easily and in higher amounts than the grass in your lawn. As the iron oxidizes, it kills weeds within just hours after applying it.

Manually digging up weeds by the root may be the most effective way to get rid of them. It is also the most labor intensive.

### Organic Alternatives to Roundup

#### Common brand name organic herbicides include:



**CN** ConsumerNotice.org

Several brands of organic herbicides are available in the United States. They tend to use naturally occurring oils or acids to kill weeds. These products typically work on weeds after they've sprouted. However, they are not usually effective against perennial weeds.

Organic Roundup alternatives include herbicidal soaps that use fatty acids to kill weeds and industrial vinegar, which contains much higher levels of acetic acid than what you have in your kitchen. Acid-based herbicides burn down some young weeds.

Corn gluten meal can kill grass weeds and broadleaf weeds. To use it, spread 20 pounds for every 1,000 square feet of garden. Wait five days to water the area if it hasn't rained. It should kill weeds for up to six weeks.




Organic herbicides are most effective when weeds are still small and less effective as weeds get older, according to a study by the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The study found that the organic weed killers were 60 percent to 100 percent effective if used in high volume against certain weeds before they were 12 days old. But they were less than 40 percent effective if used on broadleaf weeds after 26 days.

## Home Recipe for a Roundup Alternative

If you're worried about Roundup and cancer risks, you can cook up an alternative using easy-to-find household ingredients. The internet is full of formulas you can make at home, but you should be careful. Even seemingly safer or organic mixtures can kill plants you want to protect, damage your soil or cause you harm.

### Homemade Roundup Alternative Recipe



-  **1/2 gallon of organic vinegar**
-  **1/2 cup of salt**
-  **2 tablespoons of dish soap**

**CN** ConsumerNotice.org

Source: [North Dakota State University](#)

Researchers at North Dakota State University tested a popular vinegar, salt and soap homemade herbicide formula in 2014. They found it was effective at killing small annual weeds. It didn't work very well on large annual weeds or perennials. Annuals are plants that only live a year. Perennials are those that live two years or more, coming back each year.

The researchers found glyphosate was cheaper, but the homemade mix, using store brand ingredients, was still less than \$3 a gallon. That made it practical for home use against certain weeds.

The mixture can still be toxic to humans and animals if swallowed. Based on animal tests, the researchers estimated that a gallon of the salt and vinegar concoction was nearly 10 times more toxic than the store brand glyphosate they tested it against. So it should be stored away from children and pets.