

Mustard Meal as a Biopesticide

M.J. Morra, University of Idaho



Oil is removed from mustard seed to make biodiesel, leaving behind the valuable meal byproduct shown above.



This meal contains chemicals that give it a pungency like that in some familiar spices. These same chemicals have biological activity and behave as pesticides.



Mustard meal can be used as a soil amendment to control a wide variety of plant pests, including weeds, insects, and nematodes. Efforts are underway to register different meals as biopesticides, thus developing commercially viable products to decrease biodiesel's cost to the consumer. Shown above is the effect mustard meal has on two common weeds, wild oat and redroot pigweed.