

# The role of allelopathy in agricultural pest management

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## Abstract

Allelopathy is a naturally occurring ecological phenomenon of interference among organisms that may be employed for managing weeds, insect pests and diseases in field crops. In field crops, allelopathy can be used following rotation, using cover crops, mulching and plant extracts for natural pest management. Application of allelopathic plant extracts can effectively control weeds and insect pests. However, mixtures of allelopathic water extracts are more effective than the application of single-plant extract in this regard. Combined application of allelopathic extract and reduced herbicide dose (up to half the standard dose) give as much weed control as the standard herbicide dose in several field crops. Lower doses of herbicides may help to reduce the development of herbicide resistance in weed ecotypes. Allelopathy thus offers an attractive environmentally friendly alternative to pesticides in agricultural pest management. In this review, application of allelopathy for natural pest management, particularly in small-farm intensive agricultural systems, is discussed.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Allelopathy is a phenomenon whereby secondary metabolites synthesised by fungi, viruses, microorganisms and plants influence biological and agricultural systems, which may be either stimulatory or inhibitory.<sup>1</sup> The word allelopathy is derived from two Greek words: 'allelon', meaning 'of each other', and 'pathos', meaning 'to suffer'.<sup>2,3</sup> This ancient concept was known to classical researchers in the Greek and Roman era.<sup>4</sup> Detrimental effects of crop plants on other plants were observed by Theophrastus<sup>5</sup> and by Pliny II,<sup>6</sup> while De Candolle<sup>7</sup> considered allelopathy to be soil sickness. The term 'allelopathy' was first used by Austrian plant physiologist Molisch,<sup>8</sup> who defined it as the chemical interaction among plants and microorganisms.

However, according to Rice,<sup>9</sup> allelopathy is the influence of one plant on the growth of another one, including microorganisms, by the release of chemical compounds into the environment. These chemicals are usually secondary plant metabolites or byproducts of the principal metabolic pathways in plants. They are non-nutritional and can be synthesised in any plant part, i.e. leaves, stems, roots, bark, seeds, etc. Under favourable environmental conditions, allelochemicals are released into the environment through the processes of volatilisation, root exudation, decomposition and/or leaching, thereby affecting the growth of adjacent plants.<sup>9,10</sup> Nonetheless, not all allelochemicals are involved in vital physiological events within the plant system.

Allelopathy involves the synthesis of plant bioactive compounds, known as allelochemicals, capable of acting as natural pesticides<sup>11,12</sup> and can resolve problems such as resistance development in pest biotypes, health defects and soil and environmental pollution caused by the indiscriminate use of synthetic agrochemicals.<sup>12–14</sup> Allelopathic crops, when used as cover crops, mulch, smother crops, intercrops or green manures, or grown in

rotational sequences, can combat biotic stresses such as weed infestation, insect pests and disease pathogens and additionally build up fertility and organic matter status of soil, thereby reducing soil erosion, and improve farm yields.<sup>15,16</sup> Thus, allelopathy may be exploited profitably in many ways. In this regard, Birkett *et al.*<sup>17</sup> have mentioned the following pragmatic options of pest management using allelopathy:

- Exploitation of traditional intercropping approaches with plants such as *Mentha* spp., *Saturegia montana* L. and cultivated members of the genus *Ocimum* to suppress weeds.<sup>18</sup> The essential oils from these plants are applied to soil to replace commonly used methyl bromide. Control of noxious weeds and parasitic plants such as strigas [*Striga hermonthica* (Del.) Benth. and *S. riga asiatica* (L.) Kuntze] have been successful in intercropping, even with aggressive competitors such as sweet potato [*Ipomoea batatas* (L.) Lam.].<sup>19</sup>
- Effective control of *S. hermonthica* (Del.) Benth. infestation in maize (*Zea mays* L.) by two leguminous intercropping plants – greenleaf [*Desmodium intortum* (Mill.) Urb.] and silverleaf [*D. uncinatum* (Jacq.) DC.] – which also work

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against stem borer in maize owing to their insect-repelling properties.<sup>20</sup> Farmer-managed field trials significantly increased maize yield (almost double) by intercropping with these legumes compared with traditional intercropping with hemp (*Crotalaria* spp.), cowpea [*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp.] and soybean [*Glycine max* (L.) Merr.]. Khan et al.<sup>20</sup> suggested that the mechanism(s) involved are principally allelopathy rather than nitrogen fixation. Further, Hooper et al.<sup>21</sup> identified a C-glycosylflavonoid named isoschaftoside from silverleaf to be responsible for allelopathic suppression of *Striga* in maize–silverleaf intercropping.

- (c) Using leguminous cover crops with allelopathic properties such as velvet bean [*Mucuna pruriens* (L.) DC.] proved beneficial in rice (*Oryza sativa* L.) cultivation and in maize and kidney bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.) intercropping systems in Japan.<sup>22,23</sup> Increase in rice yield was attributed to both nitrogen fixation and legume allelopathy.
- (d) Germination stimulants and other regulatory signal compounds produced by allelopathic plants can influence crop–weed interactions.

Pesticide application has become the most widely adopted method for controlling weeds, insect pests and disease pathogens for successful crop production, but their non-judicious use also registers ill effects on soil, water, air, humans and animal health.<sup>24</sup> Surface water and groundwater used for human and livestock consumption may be contaminated with pesticides.<sup>25</sup> Residues of pesticides from plants or soil enter the food chain, which may prove hazardous by causing dangerous diseases to humans and animals.<sup>26</sup>

Wise exploitation of allelopathy in cropping systems may be an effective, economical and natural method of pest management, and a substitute for heavy use of pesticides. Pesticide use may be reduced by exploiting allelopathy as an alternate pest management tool in sustainable intensive crop production. Several researchers have described allelochemicals as natural pesticides.<sup>12,27–32</sup> Allelochemicals usually have a mode of action different from synthetic herbicides,<sup>12</sup> being more easily and rapidly degradable owing to a shorter half-life, with comparatively fewer halogen substituents and no unnatural ring structures.<sup>12,33,34</sup> Phytochemicals have low or no toxicity to animals and beneficial insects, possess an array of activity with varying and diverse site of action and have a comparatively high degradation rate.<sup>35,36</sup> Allelochemicals may influence vital physiological processes such as respiration, photosynthesis, cell division and elongation, membrane fluidity, protein biosynthesis and activity of many enzymes, and may also affect tissue water status.<sup>37</sup> Allelochemicals are usually more effective in mixtures than singly to influence targets.<sup>38</sup> Previous reviews on allelopathy include research on allelopathic potential of plants,<sup>39,40</sup> genetic differences among cultivars to suppress crops and weeds,<sup>40</sup> identification of allelochemicals,<sup>41</sup> significance of allelopathy in ecosystems<sup>15,42,43</sup> and possibilities of using allelopathic crops for weed management in field crops.<sup>11,39,40</sup> In the present review, the possible use of allelopathy as an alternative to pesticides for managing weeds, insect pests and diseases, especially in small-farm intensive agricultural systems, is discussed.

## 2 WEED MANAGEMENT

Allelopathic species suppress weeds when employed in the field following crop rotation,<sup>44</sup> cover or smother crops,<sup>15,39</sup> intercropping, crop residue incorporation,<sup>15,39,41,44</sup> mulching<sup>15,41</sup>

(Table 1) and allelopathic crop water extracts (Table 2).<sup>16,30,32,45</sup> Various management strategies for weed management using allelopathy are detailed below.

### 2.1 Crop rotation

Crop rotation is the sequential sowing of various crops in a particular field over a definite time period. In crop rotation, allelopathic or smothering crops use allelochemicals exuded by roots and released by decomposition of preceding crop residues to suppress weeds, disease pathogens and insect pests.<sup>46–49</sup> A properly designed crop rotation can increase yield by around 20%.<sup>50</sup> Crop rotation leads to numerous benefits over monocultures. Special attention should be paid to pest management when designing the rotation. Factors such as different root systems and plant architecture, differences in sowing and harvesting times, allelopathy, varying soil and crop management techniques and diverse cultural practices may be responsible for pest suppression and other benefits in a rotation.<sup>48</sup> Plant-released allelochemicals through root exudation and litter decomposition in rotational sequence suppress weeds. Crop rotation is also helpful in neutralising potential autotoxic effects associated with allelochemicals. Crops following sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor* L.) face less weed competition owing to suppression of weeds by allelochemicals added to soil by the sorghum crop.<sup>51</sup>

Rice–wheat is a major cropping system in many Asian countries. Heavily infested with weeds, this system largely relies on herbicide inputs for weed control. Integration of smothering allelopathic crops such as pearl millet (*Pennisetum glaucum* L.), maize and sorghum in the rice–wheat cropping system, grown after harvesting wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) and before rice transplantation, offers effective weed control for the upcoming rice crop for at least 45 days. Fodder crops such as oats (*Avena sativa* L.) or Egyptian clover (*Trifolium alexandrinum* L.) can be grown in wheat fields heavily infested with weeds for natural weed control for at least one season.<sup>48</sup> *Orobancha minor* (JE Smith), a parasitic weed infesting many crops, can be avoided in red clover (*Trifolium pratense* L.) if sown in wheat-vacated fields. Wheat has the potential for integration as a trap crop as it stimulates parasitic seed germination without attachment, so working as a false host. This can therefore be used to suppress the parasitic weed infestation.<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, damaging consequences of an allelopathic crop in rotation have also been observed. For instance, in a sorghum–wheat rotation, allelochemicals exuded from sorghum affected the development of the subsequent wheat crop.<sup>33</sup> Investigation of rotational sequences with allelopathic effects to control weeds and screening and development of crop varieties with allelopathic effects against pests are currently needed.

### 2.2 Cover crops

Cover crops are grown to control weeds, conserve soil, suppress insects, nematodes and other disease pathogens, enhance nutrient recycling and supply fodder.<sup>53–58</sup> Important cover crops include sunhemp (*Crotalaria juncea* L.), yellow sweet clover [*Melilotus officinalis* (L.) Pall.], sorghum, cowpea, alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* L.), velvet bean, red clover and ryegrass (*Lolium perenne* L.).

Legume crops such as velvet bean, jumbie bean [*Leucaena leucocephala* (Lam.) de Wit], wild tamarind [*Lysiloma latisiliquum* (L.) Benth.] and jack bean [*Canavalia ensiformis* (L.) DC.], used as cover crops in maize, substantially reduced the barnyardgrass

**Table 1.** Allelopathic inhibition of weeds with various mulches, crop residues and cover crops

Allelopathic source	Application mode	Rate (t ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Dominant weed species	Weed control (over control) <sup>a</sup>	Increase in yield (over control)	Reference
Black mustard ( <i>Brassica nigra</i> L.)	Mulch	Incorporated in soil 30 DAS	<i>Avena fatua</i> L.	68% reduction in DW	–	Turk and Tawaha <sup>119</sup>
Lilyturf ( <i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i> K.)	Mixed in soil as powder	5	<i>Monochoria vaginalis</i> P., <i>Cyperus difformis</i> L., <i>Bidens biternata</i> L.	82.6% 100%	–	Lin et al. <sup>120</sup>
Billy goat weed ( <i>Ageratum conyzoides</i> L.)	Mixed in soil as powder	2	<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i> L.	70% reduction in growth	–	Xuan et al. <sup>121</sup>
Billy goat weed			<i>Monochoria vaginalis</i> L.	100%	–	
Billy goat weed			<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i> L., <i>Monochoria vaginalis</i> L., <i>Aeschynomene indica</i> L.	75%	14%	
Billy goat weed			<i>Aeschynomene indica</i>	100%	–	
Billy goat weed			<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i> L., <i>Monochoria vaginalis</i> L., <i>Aeschynomene indica</i> L.	85.5% reduction in weed density and 75.3% in DW	23.3%	
Hairy beggarticks ( <i>Bidens pilosa</i> L.)	Dried material applied as mulch	2	<i>Fimbristylis miliacea</i> L., <i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i> L., <i>Leptochloa chinensis</i> L., <i>Rotala indica</i> L., <i>Cyperus difformis</i> L., <i>Sphenochlea zeylanica</i> , <i>Murdannia keisak</i> Hassk.), <i>Commelina diffusa</i> L., <i>Jussiaea decurrens</i> Walt., <i>Brachiaria mutica</i> Forssk., <i>Dactyloctenium aegyptium</i> L., <i>Monochoria vaginalis</i> L.	84.9%	23.3%	Hong et al. <sup>122</sup>
White tephrosia ( <i>Tephrosia candida</i> L.)	Dried material applied as mulch	2		81.1%	23.3%	
Kabling-parang ( <i>Anisomeles indica</i> L.)	Dried leaf powder mulch	1	<i>Phalaris minor</i> Retz.	Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (32.6%) and DW (33.9%)	92.9%	Batish et al. <sup>77</sup>
		2		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (42.6%) and DW (45.5%)	99.6%	
		4		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (53.5%) and DW (60.2%)	74.2%	
		6		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (67.8%) and DW (72.9%)	17.8%	

**Table 1.** (Continued)

Allelopathic source	Application mode	Rate (t ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Dominant weed species	Weed control (over control) <sup>a</sup>	Increase in yield (over control)	Reference
	Dried root powder mulch	1		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (38.6%) and DW (40.4%)	96.4%	
		2		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (52.2%) and DW (50.6%)	105.85%	
		4		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (64.5%) and DW (65.3%)	80.0%	
		6		Reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> density (68.3%) and DW (74.6%)	38.7%	
Mexican marigold ( <i>Tagetes minuta</i> L.)	Dried leaf powder mulch	1	<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i> L., <i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Reduction in total weed density (29.8%) and DW (41.2%)	33.8%	Batish et al. <sup>7,6</sup>
		2		Reduction in total weed density (69.5%) and DW (75.1%)	58.6%	
Rye ( <i>Secale cereale</i> L.)	Cover crop	-	<i>Sida spinosa</i> L., <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L., <i>Xanthium strumarium</i> L., <i>Ipomoea</i> spp., <i>Cassia obtusifolia</i> L., <i>Amaranthus</i> spp.	80–90%	-	Nagabhushana et al. <sup>123</sup>

<sup>a</sup> DW: dry weight.

**Table 2.** Allelopathic potential of water extracts for weed suppression in field crops

Allelopathic extract	Frequency (number of sprays); time of application (days after spraying)	Crop	Weed species	Weed control (%)	Yield increase (%)	Reference
Sorghum ( <i>Sorghum bicolor</i> L.)	Three sprays; 15, 30, 45	Cotton	<i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L.	Reduction in total weed density (47%) and DW (29%)	45	Cheema <i>et al.</i> <sup>124</sup>
	One spray; 30	Wheat	<i>Fumaria indica</i> Hauskn., <i>Phalaris minor</i> Retz., <i>Rumex dentatus</i> L., <i>Chenopodium album</i> L., <i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L., <i>Chenopodium album</i> L., <i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> L.	Reduction in total weed density (21.6%) and DW (35.4%) Reduction in total weed density (23.1%) and DW (38.7%) Reduction in total weed density (44.2%) and DW (49%) Reduction in total weed density (39.0%) and DW (36.0%) Reduction in total weed density (17.54%) and DW (23.73%) Reduction in total weed density (31.58%) and DW (44.11%)	11 15 20 14 8.23 17.75	Cheema and Khalig <sup>80</sup>
	Two sprays; 30, 60					
	Two sprays; 30, 60					
	Two sprays; 30, 60	Mungbean				Cheema <i>et al.</i> <sup>125</sup>
	Two sprays; 30, 60					
	One spray; 20	Cotton	<i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L., <i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> L., <i>Cynodon dactylon</i> L., <i>C. rotundus</i> L.	Reduction in total weed DW (32.6%) Reduction in total weed DW (35.2%) Reduction in total weed DW (40.1%)	17.7 59.0 23.0	Cheema <i>et al.</i> <sup>126</sup>
	Two sprays; 20, 40					
	Three sprays; 20, 40, 60					
	One spray; 20	Sunflower	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L., <i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L.	Reduction in total weed density (19.3%) and DW (27.2%) Reduction in total weed density (15.8%) and DW (19.12%)	7.7 3.6	Nawaz <i>et al.</i> <sup>127</sup>
	One spray; 40					
	Two sprays; 30, 40	Wheat	<i>Phalaris minor</i> Retz., <i>Avena fatua</i> L., <i>Mellilotus officinalis</i> L., <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> L.	Reduction in total weed density (16.53%) Reduction in total weed density (33.59%) and DW (2.22%) Reduction in total weed density (15.86%) and DW (22.75%)	1.58 5.50 –	Cheema <i>et al.</i> <sup>90</sup>
	Two sprays; 30, 40					
Sunflower ( <i>Helianthus annuus</i> L.)	Two sprays; 30, 40					
Eucalyptus ( <i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> L.)	Two sprays; 30, 40					
Sorghum + sunflower + eucalyptus	One spray; 30			Reduction in total weed density (27.53%) and DW (34.26%)	3.47	
Sorghum	Two sprays; 30, 40		<i>Phalaris minor</i> Retz.	DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (23–41%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (21–41%)	39	Jamil <i>et al.</i> <sup>38</sup>
Sorghum + eucalyptus	Two sprays; 30, 40		<i>Avena fatua</i> L.	DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (13–28%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (28–32%)	47.5	
Sorghum + sunflower <sup>a</sup>	Two sprays; 30, 40			DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (30–35%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (24–39%)	62	
Sorghum + sesame ( <i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.)	Two, 30, 40			DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (21–24%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (19–24%)	44	
Sorghum + tobacco ( <i>Nicotiana tobaccum</i> L.)	Two, 30, 40			DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (10–14%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (14%)	18.5	
Sorghum + brassica	Two, 30, 40			DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (21–27%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (18–24%)	19	
Sorghum + sunflower <sup>b</sup>	Two, 30, 40			DW reduction in <i>Phalaris minor</i> (36–55%) and <i>Avena fatua</i> (42–62%)	53.5%	

<sup>a</sup> Two sprays, 6 L ha<sup>-1</sup> each.<sup>b</sup> Two sprays, 12 L ha<sup>-1</sup> each.

[*Echinochloa crus-galli* (L.) Beauv.] population; however, velvet bean was the best cover crop for weed control.<sup>59</sup> Likewise, barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) grown as a cover crop for weed control in soybean suppressed weeds such as crabgrass [*Digitaria ciliaris* (Retz.) Koel.] and barnyardgrass.<sup>60</sup> The smothering effects of velvet bean, jack bean and hyacinth bean (*Lablab purpureus* L.) effectively controlled mission grass [*Pennisetum polystachion* (L.) Schult.], a troublesome weed in rubber plantations.<sup>61</sup>

Spiderlily (*Lycoris radiata* L.) is used as a ground cover crop to suppress weeds or is incorporated into soil as mulch. Dead leaves of spiderlily contain the allelochemical lycorine (0.08%) which inhibits emergence and reduces root and shoot growth and root dry weight of rice weeds.<sup>62</sup> Among leaf extracts of 71 plant species, lettuce (*Lactuca sativa* L.) growth was suppressed by most cover crops including trefoil [*Oxalis brasiliensis* Lodd. ex Knowl. & West.], star-of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum* L.), moss pink (*Phlox subulata* L.), European pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium* L.), red spiderlily [*Lycoris radiata* (L. Herit.) Herb], creeping thyme (*Thymus serpyllum* L.) and roman chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile* L.). Trefoil, red spiderlily, moss pink, trefoil and creeping thyme leached in agar reduced the radicle length of weed species by 8–31, 14–24, 11–43, 31–74 and 22–67%, respectively, of the untreated control.<sup>63</sup>

Cover crops incorporated into soil as green manure can delay planting and emergence owing to excess soil moisture, have phytotoxic effects on major crops and increase nitrogen immobilisation.<sup>64</sup> This can, however, be avoided through the adoption of good management practices and by optimising and integrating cover crops in a cropping system.<sup>65</sup>

### 2.3 Mulching

Mulch is spread over the soil surface to suppress weeds, among other strategies. Mulches obstruct seed germination of weeds and inhibit weed seedling growth through the release of allelochemicals.<sup>66,67</sup> Established weeds, however, are difficult to control with mulches. In addition to weed suppression, use of allelopathic crop residues as surface mulch benefits agricultural sustainability by adding organic matter to soil, conserving soil moisture, improving water infiltration into soil, decreasing the impact of raindrops on soil, modifying/regulating soil temperature, enhancing biological activities in soil and controlling soil erosion.<sup>68–70</sup>

Allelopathic plant mulches applied to rice fields at 1–2 t ha<sup>-1</sup> suppressed noxious paddy weeds such as barnyardgrass, purple nutsedge (*Cyperus rotundus* L.), flat sedge (*C. difformis* L.) and jungle rice [*Echinochloa colonum* (L.) Link.] by more than 70% and increased paddy yield by 20%.<sup>71</sup> Soils amended with olive wastes (10 cm deep) suppressed weed species including annual meadow grass (*Poa annua* L.), common chickweed (*Stellaria media* L.), shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris* L.), German chamomile [*Matricaria chamomilla* (L.) Rydb.] and henbit deadnettle (*Lamium amplexicaule* L.) in crops such as sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.), wheat and maize.<sup>72</sup> Surface mulch of purple passionfruit (*Passiflora edulis* L.) applied at 2 t ha<sup>-1</sup> in paddy fields reduced the population of barnyardgrass and monochororia (*Monochoria vaginalis* L.) weeds and increased rice yields by 35% compared with the control, while ten allelochemicals from coumarins, long-chain fatty acids and lactones were discovered.<sup>73</sup> Rice hull and bran were also effective in controlling paddy weed when applied at 1 t ha<sup>-1</sup>.<sup>74</sup> Likewise, the release of phytotoxic substances from alfalfa plant parts after decomposition was inhibitory to troublesome weeds such as barnyardgrass and monochororia.<sup>75</sup> Wheat residues as soil

cover reduced weed density and dry weight while conserving soil moisture.<sup>67</sup> Amending soil with 1–2 t ha<sup>-1</sup> of mint marigold (*Tagetes minuta* L.), a medicinal plant, suppressed problematic rice weeds – barnyardgrass and purple nutsedge – while leaf and root powder of Indian catmint [*Anisomeles indica* (L.) Kuntze] applied as mulch in wheat fields significantly reduced density and dry mass of littleseed canarygrass (*Phalaris minor* Ritz.) and improved plant height, tillering dry matter and grain yield.<sup>76,77</sup>

Teasdale and Mohler<sup>66</sup> reported quantitative relationships between emergence and mulch properties with mulches such as maize stalks, rye (*Secale cereale* L.), crimson clover (*T. incarnatum* L.), hairy vetch (*Vicia villosa* Roth), *Quercus* leaves and landscape fabric strips. The sensitivity of weed species to mulch was in the order: common tumbleweed (*Amaranthus retroflexus* L.) > lambsquarters (*Chenopodium album* L.) > giant foxtail (*Setaria faberi* Herrm.) > velvetleaf [*Abutilon theophrasti* (L.) Rusby], regardless of mulch material. Another study by Gruber *et al.*<sup>78</sup> determined the effect of wood chips [0 (control), 80 and 160 m<sup>3</sup> ha<sup>-1</sup> annually] derived from hedgerow and tree mulch on weeds of organically grown wheat. Wood chip mulch effectively suppressed weeds in the field, while their allelopathic potential in the laboratory reduced germination rates in oilseed rape (*Brassica napus* L.), blackgrass (*Alopecurus myosuroides* Huds) and field poppy (*Papaver rhoeas* L.). Wood chips also improved organic matter, nutrient levels and water storage capabilities of the soil.

### 2.4 Allelopathic water extracts

Water-soluble secondary metabolites or allelochemicals present in the plant tissues are extracted in water to use them for pest management.<sup>10</sup> Water extracts can be used as a medium for the expression of allelochemical activity to depress the growth of other organisms.<sup>10,11</sup> Several researchers have suggested the use of allelochemicals extracted in water for weed suppression in the laboratory and also application under field conditions.<sup>27,31,32</sup> Jabran *et al.*<sup>31,32</sup> and Jamil *et al.*<sup>38</sup> described the utilisation of allelopathic water extract as an important and useful way of exploiting the allelopathic potential of crop plants to manage weeds. Water extracts of mature sorghum plants substantially reduced the weed population and biomass.<sup>79,80</sup>

In wheat, application of sorghum water extracts at various rates and frequencies has been found to reduce weed growth and density, with a simultaneous increase in grain yield.<sup>79,80</sup> Application of sorghum water extract 30 and 60 days after sowing reduced the weed biomass and density by 49 and 44% respectively (Table 2), with increase in grain yield (21%), when applied at 1:10 w/v ratio.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, single and multiple application of allelopathic extracts provided similar levels of weed suppression and yield increase.<sup>80</sup> Application of sorghum water extract substantially reduced the population of lambsquarters (*C. album*), lesser swinecress (*Coronopus didymus* L.), toothed dock (*Rumex dentatus* L.) and Indian fumitory (*Fumaria perviflora* Lam.) when applied at 10 and 50% concentration. In this regard, maximum application of 10% sorghum water extract at 60 DAS provided the better control, with 53 and 36% reduction in weed biomass and population respectively, and with a yield increase of 14%.<sup>79</sup> In another study, application of sorghum water extract (one and two sprays) significantly reduced the lambsquarters, littleseed canarygrass, wild oat (*Avena fatua* L.), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis* L.) and toothed dock density by 22–39%, but the density and biomass of sweet clover either increased or remained unchanged.<sup>81</sup> In another experiment, single and double applications of sorghum water extract increased the wheat grain

yield by 13.5 and 18.6% compared with the control. This increase in grain yield was attributed to allelopathic suppression of weeds.<sup>82</sup>

In a range of field crops, however, the sole application of sorghum water extract had the desired level of weed control. For instance, application of sorghum water extract suppressed weeds by 35–49, 40, 37–41, 18–50 and 44% in wheat,<sup>81</sup> cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* L.),<sup>83</sup> rice,<sup>84</sup> maize,<sup>85</sup> canola (*Brassica campestris* L.)<sup>31,45</sup> and mungbean (*Vigna radiata* L.)<sup>86</sup> respectively. Duke and Lydon<sup>87</sup> reported synergism of allelochemicals from different plant extracts. Actually, the bioavailability and phytotoxicity of the allelochemicals existing in mixtures are enhanced by interactions among them. For example, the persistence of phenolic acids after decomposition of *Centaurea maculosa* was more prolonged for compounds in mixtures than for the single compounds.<sup>88,89</sup> Cheema *et al.*<sup>90</sup> tested the idea with the application of sorghum mixed with sunflower and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis* L.) water extracts. Interestingly, mixed application of sorghum, sunflower and eucalyptus water extracts was more effective for weed control in wheat compared with the sole application of sorghum water extract (Table 2).<sup>90</sup> Taking it further, Jamil *et al.*<sup>38</sup> applied sorghum water extract alone and in combination with sesame (*Sesamum indicum* L.), tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum* L.), eucalyptus, sunflower and brassica (*B. campestris* L.) for controlling wild oat (*A. fatua*) and little seed canary grass in wheat. Application of sunflower and sorghum extracts (each at 12 L ha<sup>-1</sup>) was more effective than others as it reduced little seed canary grass and wild oat biomass by 36–55 and 42–62% respectively (Table 2). Application of sorghum and sunflower extracts at 6 L ha<sup>-1</sup> each increased wheat grain yield by 89% in the first year and by 35% in the second year of experimentation over weedy check.<sup>38</sup>

### 2.5 Combined effect of allelopathic water extracts and herbicides

Substantial scope exists to reduce the herbicide rate if applied together with allelopathic water extracts. For weed control in wheat, for example, when applied in combination with sorghum water extract (12 L ha<sup>-1</sup>), the rate of isoproturon application was decreased by 50–60% (Table 3).<sup>91,92</sup> In studies on weed management in cotton and maize, at sowing, a half-dose application of atrazine (150 g ha<sup>-1</sup>) in combination with sorghum water extract (at 12 L ha<sup>-1</sup>) controlled weeds, paralleling a full dose (Table 3).<sup>83,93</sup> These authors further observed that the combined application of sorghum water extract (at 12 L ha<sup>-1</sup>) and pendimethalin at one-third of the standard dose produced more seed cotton yield than the full dose, even though weed suppression was relatively less. In another study, weed suppression from the combined application of sorghum extract and reduced herbicide dose (400 g ha<sup>-1</sup>) and a full dose of isoproturon (1 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) was similar during the first year.<sup>91</sup>

Recent field studies evaluated allelopathic suppression of weeds in a canola field using crop water extracts – sorghum, sunflower, brassica and rice – applied in combination with reduced doses of pendimethalin (one-third and half the recommended dose).<sup>31,45</sup> Crop water extracts at 15 L ha<sup>-1</sup> each combined with pendimethalin at 400 and 600 g ha<sup>-1</sup> were sprayed immediately after sowing, while the standard dose of pendimethalin was taken as control. Application of rice and sorghum water extracts in combination with a half-dose of pendimethalin suppressed the total weed population the most – by 67.58 and 66.21% at 40 and 60 DAS respectively. All treatments reduced total weed dry weight by more than 80% at 40 DAS, while at 60 DAS the reductions ranged from 44.93 to 63.99%. Plots treated with sorghum and

sunflower water extracts + 600 g ha<sup>-1</sup> pendimethalin recorded maximum seed yields of 2.6 Mg ha<sup>-1</sup>, which was 39.99% more than the control. The authors concluded that 50–67% less herbicide combined with allelopathic water extracts may be effective for weed control and increase yields in canola.<sup>31,45</sup>

## 3 INSECT PEST MANAGEMENT

Extensive use of synthetic insecticides usually has negative effects on the environment and on human and animal health and, most critically, develops resistance among insects.<sup>94–96</sup> Scientists are therefore turning towards natural insect suppressants.<sup>12,27,97,98</sup> Neem (*Azadirachta indica* L.) seed oil exhibits antifeedant properties against nymphs and adults of strawberry aphids [*Chaetosiphon fragaefolii* (Cockerell)],<sup>99</sup> while azadirachtin, an allelochemical from neem plant parts, effectively inhibits insects including green cicadellid [*Jacobiasca lybica* (Bergevin and Zanon)], whitefly [*Bemisia tabaci* (Gennadius)] and *Ashbya gossypii* Guill.<sup>97</sup> Conifer plantations treated with neem oil deter feeding activity of large pine weevil (*Hylobius abietis* L.) for 3 months. Sitka spruce [*Picea sitchensis* (Bong.)] seedlings without neem oil treatment were killed by the feeding weevil, while those treated with neem oil (30 cm above the root collar) were not affected; azadirachtin, nimbin and salannin are the allelochemicals identified in neem oil.<sup>100</sup>

Similarly, Ding *et al.*<sup>101</sup> noted resistance in some wheat cultivars against wheat midge [*Sitodiplosis mosellana* (Géhin)], possibly owing to phenolics production – ferulic acid and *p*-coumaric acid. Ferulic acid killed hatched larvae when the concentration was above 0.35 mg g<sup>-1</sup> of fresh plant tissue. Decomposing residues of cover crops improved soil nutrient status and released allelochemicals that deter plant pests, particularly soil-borne disease pathogens.<sup>56,102</sup>

Exposure to volatile oils from eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus* L.) during larval periods of rice moth (*Corcyra cephalonica* St) severely affected post-embryonic development and adult emergence (Table 4).<sup>103</sup> Common rue (*Ruta graveolens* L.), a scented plant containing the allelochemicals coumarins and flavanoides, has the potential to suppress Mediterranean fruit fly [*Ceratitis capitata* (Wiedemann)] and mosquito (*Culex pipiens* L.) larvae. Jabran *et al.*<sup>27</sup> evaluated the effectiveness of allelopathic water extracts of sorghum, mustard and sunflower, along with combinations of sorghum and mulberry (*Morus alba* L.) and sorghum and sunflower, for controlling aphids and sucking insects of *Brassica* spp. Sorghum water extracts were most effective (62.5% aphid mortality) at a concentration of 8%, and sunflower water extracts (16% concentration) resulted in 52.5% aphid mortality. Combination water extracts (16%) of sorghum and mulberry resulted in 45.7% aphid mortality, and sorghum and sunflower had 57.5% mortality.

Mortality in mosquito larvae was 50 and 100% when treated with leachates at 1 and 2% w/v. Absolute mortality of medfly eggs, delay in metamorphosis of first-instar larvae for 2 days, failure of pupae to produce adults and a 26% reduction in pupal population resulted when 10% extract was mixed in the artificial diet.<sup>104</sup>

Ethanol extracts from leaves of California pepper tree (*Schinus molle* L.) imparted insecticidal effects on adults of the elm leaf beetle (*Xanthogaleruca luteola* Müller.) by killing more than 97% of the population at concentrations of 4.3 and 4.7% w/v, while their water extract exhibited complete inhibition of feeding activity of the insect pest.<sup>105</sup> Kong<sup>98</sup> reviewed the allelopathic activity of three weeds including great ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida* L.), chick weed (*Ageratum conyzoides* L.) and Spanish flag (*Lantana*

**Table 3.** Combined application of allelopathic water extracts and reduced herbicide doses for weed suppression in field crops

Allelopathic extract	Herbicide	Crop	Weed species	Weed control (%)		Yield increase (%)		Reference
				Standard herbicide	Herbicide (1/2 dose) + allelopathic extract	Standard herbicide	Herbicide (1/2 dose) + allelopathic extract	
Sorghum + brassica (15 L ha <sup>-1</sup> each)	Pendimethalin (1.2 kg a.i. ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Canola	<i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L.	100% reduction in density and DW	Reduction in density (91.3%) and DW (94.18%)	35.99	39.99	Jabran et al. <sup>31,45</sup>
			<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Reduction in density (32.2%) and DW (6.34%)	Reduction in density (42.82%) and DW (37.46%)			
			<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	Reduction in density (78.37%) and DW (83.07%)	Reduction in density (74.27%) and DW (62.2%)			
			<i>Coronopus didymus</i> (L.) Sm.	Reduction in density (39.39%) and DW (37.25%)	Reduction in density (66.09%) and DW (70.45%)			
Sorghum (12 L ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Isoproturon (1 kg a.i. ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Wheat	<i>Phalaris minor</i> Ritz., <i>Melilotus parviflora</i> Desf., <i>Coronopus didymus</i> (L.) Sm., <i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	Reduction in total weed density (94.10%) and DW (78.52%)	Reduction in total weed density (94.25%) and DW (64.82%)	33.87	32.25	Cheema et al. <sup>91</sup>
Sorghum + sunflower (15 L ha <sup>-1</sup> each)	Pendimethalin (825 mL ha <sup>-1</sup> ) <sup>a</sup>	Sunflower		Reduction in total weed density (95%) and DW (86%)	Reduction in total weed density (84%) and DW (67.26%)	19	16.44	Awan et al. <sup>128</sup>
Sorghum (12 L ha <sup>-1</sup> )	S. metolachlor (2.15 kg a.i. ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Cotton	<i>Melilotus indica</i> L., <i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Reduction in weed density (82%) and DW (86%)	77% reduction in both weed density and DW	33.85	31.57	Iqbal and Cheema <sup>129</sup>
Sorghum (10 L ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Pendimethalin (1 kg a.i. ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Cotton	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Reduction in weed density (34.78) and DW (50.98%)	Reduction in weed density (39.13%) and DW (37.25%)	19.96	7.97	Iqbal et al. <sup>83</sup>
			<i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L.	Reduction in weed density (50.54%) and DW (70.08%)	Reduction in weed density (51.92%) and DW (50.31%)			
	S. metolachlor (2 kg a.i. ha <sup>-1</sup> )		<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Reduction in weed density (52.17%) and DW (61.41%)	Reduction in weed density (47.82%) and DW (62.82%)	18.14	3.52	
			<i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L.	Reduction in weed density (53.84%) and DW (56.91%)	Reduction in weed density (53.85%) and DW (56.60%)			

<sup>a</sup> As Stomp 330E.



**Table 4.** Allelopathic suppression of insect pests

Allelopathic source	Application rate/mode	Insect suppression	Reference
NeemAzal-T/S®	20 g a.i. ha <sup>-1</sup>	91.88% mortality of <i>Jacobiasca lybica</i> (Berg. and Zanon) nymphs	El Shafie and Basedow <sup>97</sup>
California pepper tree ( <i>Schinus molle</i> Rev L.)	Ethanol extract (4.7% w/v) Water extract (5.6% w/v)	91.77% mortality of elm leaf beetle ( <i>Xanthogaleruca luteola</i> Müller) 27.78% mortality of elm leaf beetle ( <i>Xanthogaleruca luteola</i> Müller)	Huerta <i>et al.</i> <sup>105</sup>
Fig-leaf goosefoot ( <i>Chenopodium ficifolium</i> Sm.)	Ethanol extract (5000 mg mL <sup>-1</sup> ) Methanol extract (5000 mg mL <sup>-1</sup> ) <i>n</i> -Hexane extract (5000 mg mL <sup>-1</sup> ) Acetone extract (5000 mg mL <sup>-1</sup> )	86% control of aphid ( <i>Aphis gossypii</i> Glover) 83% control of aphid ( <i>Aphis gossypii</i> Glover) 54% control of aphid ( <i>Aphis gossypii</i> Glover) 47% control of aphid ( <i>Aphis gossypii</i> Glover)	Dang <i>et al.</i> <sup>130</sup>
Eucalyptus ( <i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> L.) Neem ( <i>Azadirachta indica</i> L.) Birbira ( <i>Milletia ferruginea</i> Hochst.)	Oil volatiles Oil volatiles Seed crude extract	Reduction in male (78%) and female (66.67%) adults of <i>Coryca cephalonica</i> St Reduction in male (26%) adults of <i>Coryca cephalonica</i> , St 93–100% mortality of adult <i>Macrotermes</i> termites	Pathak and Krishna <sup>103</sup> Jembere <i>et al.</i> <sup>131</sup>
Neem	Seed kernels water extract (2%)	45–60% mortality of sorghum chaffer ( <i>Pachnoda interrupta</i> Oliver) Reduction in flower thrip ( <i>Taeniothrips sjostedti</i> Trybom) (54%) and pod borer ( <i>Heliothis armigera</i> Hb.) (32%) incidence	Hongo and Karel <sup>132</sup>
Tomato ( <i>Lycopersicon esculentum</i> L.)	Leaf water extract (4%)	Reduction in flower thrip ( <i>Taeniothrips sjostedti</i> Trybom) (45%) and pod borer ( <i>Heliothis armigera</i> Hb.) (24%) incidence	
Hot pepper ( <i>Capsicum unnuum</i> L.)	Leaf water extract (4%) Fruit water extract (2%)	Reduction in flower thrip ( <i>Taeniothrips sjostedti</i> Trybom) (32%) and pod borer ( <i>Heliothis armigera</i> Hb.) (12%) incidence Reduction in flower thrip ( <i>Taeniothrips sjostedti</i> Trybom) (54%) and pod borer ( <i>Heliothis armigera</i> Hb.) (31%) incidence	

**Table 5.** Allelopathic suppression of pathogens, nematodes and diseases

Allelopathic source	Application mode/rate	Pathogen/disease suppression	Reference
Barley ( <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.) + potato	Grown in rotation	55.1% reduction in inoculum intensity of <i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> (JG Kühn)	Larkin and Griffin <sup>133</sup>
Turnip ( <i>Brassica rapa</i> L.) + potato	Grown in rotation	56.2% reduction in inoculum intensity of <i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> (JG Kühn)	
Indian mustard ( <i>Brassica juncea</i> L.) + potato	Grown in rotation	45.5% reduction in inoculum intensity of <i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> (JG Kühn)	
Rice ( <i>Oryza sativa</i> L.)	Root exudates (1.5 mL)	37% reduction in germination of <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>Niveum</i> spores	Ren <i>et al.</i> <sup>134</sup>
Rice	Root exudates (20 mL)	71.88% reduction in spore reproduction of <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>Niveum</i>	
Neem ( <i>Azadirachta indica</i> L.)	Leaf water extract (20% w/v)	53.22% reduction in the growth of <i>Fusarium solani</i> f. sp. <i>melongenae</i>	Joseph <i>et al.</i> <sup>135</sup>
Sweet wormwood ( <i>Artemisia annua</i> L.)	Leaf water extract (20% w/v)	42.20% reduction in the growth of <i>Fusarium solani</i> f. sp. <i>melongenae</i>	
Eucalyptus ( <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> Labill)	Leaf water extract (20% w/v)	46.76% reduction in the growth of <i>Fusarium solani</i> f. sp. <i>melongenae</i>	
Tulsi ( <i>Ocimum sanctum</i> L.)	Leaf water extract (20% w/v)	43.98% reduction in the growth of <i>Fusarium solani</i> f. sp. <i>melongenae</i>	
Rhubarb ( <i>Rheum emodi</i> Wall)	Leaf water extract (20% w/v)	37.19% reduction in the growth of <i>Fusarium solani</i> f. sp. <i>melongenae</i>	
Neem ( <i>Azadirachta indica</i> L.) cake	3% (w/w)	61.03% reduction in root-knot nematode ( <i>Meloidogyne javanica</i> ) females per root	Javed <i>et al.</i> <sup>110</sup>
Neem cake	3% (w/w)	63.7% reduction in root-knot nematode egg masses per root	
Neem leaves	3% (w/w)	38.3% reduction in root-knot nematode females per root	
Neem leaves	3% (w/w)	60.34% reduction in root-knot nematode egg masses per root	

*camara* L.) against insect pest and other pests. These weed species possessed allelochemicals that were not only inhibitory to insects such as cowpea weevil [*Callosbruchus maculatus* (Fabricius)] but also effective in controlling weeds and diseases.

#### 4 DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Plant disease is a serious issue causing detrimental effects on many crops including cereals, oilseeds, etc., and especially vegetables. A number of soil-borne diseases cause substantial losses to crop production by disturbing the crop stand and lowering product quality. Although cultural practices such as burning infected plant debris and using resistant cultivars have long been used, diseases still cause abundant losses in crop yields. Chemical disease control for most diseases is either unavailable or ineffective. Plant pathogens can be suppressed using allelopathic crops in different ways.

Intercropping creates a microclimate, which is helpful for reducing disease intensity.<sup>106</sup> Sugi [*Cryptomeria japonica* (L. f.) D. Don] bark has inhibitory effects against diseases causing root infections in tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum* L.).<sup>107</sup> Root exudates from Chinese chive (*Allium tuberosum* L.) inhibit multiplication of bacterial wilt (*Pseudomonas solanacearum* Smith). When intercropped with tomato, Chinese chive suppressed bacterial wilt while having no negative effect on the tomato.<sup>108</sup> Certain volatile allelochemicals are exuded from aerial parts of marigold (*Tagetes erecta* L.). When intercropped with tomato, marigold suppressed tomato early blight disease caused by *Alternaria solani* (Ell. and Mart.) Jones and Grout. by more than 90%.<sup>107</sup> Bacterial wilt of tomato (*Ps. solanacearum*) has been well controlled by intercropping tomato with cowpea.<sup>109</sup>

Neem leaves or neem cakes applied to soil have long-term effects (for 16 weeks) on the development of root-knot nematodes [*Meloidogyne javanica* (Treb.) Chitwood] (Table 5).<sup>110</sup> *Brassica* spp. produce volatile sulfur compounds (glucosinolates) in the soil microenvironment, which are converted to isothiocyanates through biofumigation to suppress soil organisms. These compounds can reduce fungal pathogens<sup>111</sup> and nematodes in the soil.

Huang *et al.*<sup>112</sup> evaluated the potential of wheat, barley, oat, rye, canola, sweet clover and lentil (*Lens culinaris* L.) water extracts (1, 2 or 4% w/v) in suppressing the lesion development of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (Lib.), the germination of ascospores and the carpogenic germination of sclerotia on detached bean leaves. Application of 1% extract of canola, 2% extracts of barley, canola, oat and lentil and 4% extracts of all seven crops substantially reduced sclerotia germination compared with the water control. However, 1, 2 and 4% extracts of barley and 1 and 4% extracts of oat suppressed ascospore germination, while these concentrations of sweet clover, wheat, canola, lentil and rye extracts promoted ascospore germination. Inoculation of detached bean leaves with ascospores of *S. sclerotiorum* mixed with 4% crop extracts of barley, oat or sweet clover significantly reduced the lesion severity index compared with leaves inoculated with water + *S. sclerotiorum*. Inoculation with 4% wheat extract significantly increased the lesion severity index. Fukuta *et al.*<sup>113</sup> evaluated the comparative *in vitro* antibacterial, fungicidal, antioxidant and herbicidal activities of momilactone A and B. Momilactone B had higher antifungal, antibacterial and herbicidal action than momilactone A, although its antioxidant property was less than that of momilactone A.

Hashem *et al.*<sup>114</sup> evaluated basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.), cumin (*Cuminum cyminum* L.) and rose geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens* L.) oil against root rot disease in cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*

L.), caused by *Fusarium* spp., and found these oils to be inhibitory to *Fusarium oxysporum*, *F. moniliforme*, *F. solani*, *F. lateritium*, *F. equiseti* and *F. dimerum*. Under *in vitro* greenhouse and field conditions, seed and soil treatment with basil, cumin and rose geranium oil was effective not only in decreasing root rot disease but also in improving growth parameters such as fresh weight, plant height, branch numbers, etc. Similarly, extract of seaweed at 0.3% concentration applied on sorghum seeds was effective in suppressing pathogens including *Bipolaris sorghicola*, *Fusarium verticilloides*, *Trichothecium roseum*, *F. solani*, *Curvularia lunata*, *Cladosporium cladosporioides*, *Alternaria alternata*, *A. strictum*, *F. oxysporum*, *Aspergillus flavipes*, etc., and improving the activity of defence enzymes including peroxidase,  $\beta$ -1,3-glucanase, phenylalanine ammonia lyase and chitinase activity.<sup>115</sup> The seed meal Ethiopian mustard (*Brassica carinata* L.) in the form of a commercial product at 2.5 t ha<sup>-1</sup> was effective in reducing root-knot nematode (*Meloidogyne chitwoodi* Golden, O'Bannon, Santo & Finley) incidence in potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) and increasing yield of potato.<sup>116</sup>

Two allelochemicals from rice, 5,7,40-trihydroxy-30,50-dimethoxyflavone (a flavone) and 3-isopropyl-5-acetoxycyclohexene-2-one-1 (a cyclohexenone), inhibited two fungal pathogens [*Rhizoctonia solani* Kühn and *Pyricularia oryzae* (Cavara)] by suppressing the germination of spores, and were suggested to be a part of the defence mechanism of rice against weeds and diseases.<sup>117</sup> A similar case was observed for insect populations where their prevalence was higher in lower plant diversity.<sup>118</sup>

## 5 CONCLUSION

Many plants, in particular rice, sunflower, sorghum, wheat, eucalyptus, mulberry, billy goat weed, white tephrosia, kabling-parang, mexican marigold, neem, california pepper, etc., have strong allelopathic potential, which may be used for managing weeds, insect pests and diseases effectively. Nonetheless, special care is required in this regard to avoid any detrimental impact of the allelopathic phenomenon on agricultural systems.

An allelopathic crop has the potential to control weeds when planted in rotational sequence or used as a smother crop or mulch, especially in conservation cropping systems. Moreover, the combined application of synthetic herbicides (at reduced rates) and allelopathic extracts may give as effective a control as is obtained from the standard dose of herbicides. Interactions among potential allelopathic plants, target pests and other non-target organisms also need to be considered.<sup>136</sup> Allelochemistry may be employed to obtain the basic templates for developing new synthetic herbicides.<sup>136</sup>

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