

## Video: 'Weed seed pulverizing machine' could help combat herbicide resistance

Known by a name seemingly out of a superhero comic book, the Harrington Seed Destructor is a mechanical beast that takes aim at a tiny but formidable enemy: the seeds from crop-destroying weeds. They plague farmers the world over, and left unchecked, weeds would [cost an estimated](#) \$43 billion in lost soy and corn production alone in the United States and Canada each year.

To fight back, most farmers have two main choices, at least for now: rip the weeds from the ground by hand or by plow, or spray them with chemical herbicides so they wither and die. But these choices have long presented a paradox. Tilling can control weeds, but it also can disrupt and degrade the soil — and poor soil grows poor crops. Herbicides, on the other hand, are easier to use — just point and spray — and they can preserve the soil's delicate structure. But just like bacteria exposed to too many antibiotics, weeds confronted by years of herbicide spraying can give rise to resistant varieties that are increasingly hard and expensive to kill.

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That's where [Steven] Mirsky [a USDA ecologist] and the Harrington Seed Destructor, or HSD for short, come in. Mirsky ... has sought practical solutions to the weed paradox for more than a decade. One of his goals is to go after the seeds, when weed populations are especially vulnerable, rather than trying to control weeds that have already taken root.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Meet the Weed Seed Pulverizing Machine](#)**