PERENNIAL SOW THISTLE—*Sonchus Arvensis*, L.

OTHER ENGLISH NAMES.—Field sow thistle, corn sow thistle, creeping sow thistle, milk thistle.

Introduced from Europe. A deep rooted perennial with large and vigorous running rootstocks. The young plant as it first appears, consists of a rosette of leaves lying close to the ground and when numerous completely covering the surface. These young plants have very short underground rootstocks and are comparatively easy to destroy, but as the plant grows readily in a great variety of soils, it soon becomes established, and sends up stems bearing leaves and flowers. The rootstocks grow long and send up numerous new shoots, one specimen examined last summer having 7 new shoots on 6 inches of root stock. Once the plant becomes established in this manner it is very difficult to eradicate.

The plant grows erect from 2 to 4 feet in height. The stem is smooth and hollow and the whole plant is filled with a bitter milky juice. Leaves are few on the stem but generally very abundant near the ground. In fact, one of the main characteristics of a patch of sow thistle is the great mass of leaves that cover the ground. The leaves are pointed, 4 to 8 inches long, and deeply cut, the divisions pointing backward. The base of the leaf clasps the stem. Plant slightly prickly all over, though a perfectly smooth variety is found occasionally. The flowers resemble the flowers of the common dandelion, being yellow and 1 to 1½ inches in diameter, 5 to 15 flowers on a single stem.

The seeds are dark reddish brown in colour, about one-eighth of an inch in diameter, and the surface is very deeply wrinkled with longitudinal ribs. Each seed bears at the top a tuft of white silky hair which when dry acts as a parachute and enables the seed to be carried long distances by the wind, more so than either dandelion or Canada thistle. The seeds of the sow thistle readily germinate in the fall. An average plant will produce between two to three thousand seeds.

This plant has been introduced into many sections of the province and strenuous steps should be taken to stamp it out. An ounce of prevention here is worth tons of cure. Anyone finding specimens of this plant, or plants that appear to be similar, is advised to send samples to Professor Willing, College of Agriculture, Saskatoon, or to the Weeds Commissioner, Department of Agriculture, Regina.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONTROL.—As noted elsewhere the kind of treatment best adapted to a particular situation depends on the extent of area infested and kind and condition of the soil.

1. For small patches and wherever practical the best plan is to dig out the plants, roots and all or to cover with manure as in case of Canada thistle.

2. It is not advisable to let perennial sow thistle grow until it blossoms on the assumption that at that time the roots will contain less vitality. As a matter of fact it generally happens that the soil becomes so full of roots that it is more difficult to do anything with the patch. The general opinion at present is that the best way to deal with large areas is to start as early in the spring as possible and surface cultivate continually to