

Index

INDEX.....	V
1 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES	1
1.1 Weeds in agriculture	1
1.1.1 Weed management practices	1
1.1.2 Impact of herbicide use	3
1.1.3 European legislation on plant protection products	7
1.2 Microbial community role in soil fertility	9
1.2.1 Soil organic matter	10
1.2.2 Microbial biomass	11
1.2.3 Soil microbial community	13
1.3 Weed control methods studied in this work.....	15
1.3.1 Natural herbicides: essential oils (EOs), aqueous extracts (AEs) and carvacrol (CAR)	15
1.3.3 Synthetic herbicide: Oxyfluorfen (OXY)	20
1.3.4 Physical management techniques: tillage and mulching	23
1.4 Objectives	24
2 MATERIALS AND METHODS.....	26
2.1 Soil analysis	26
2.1.1 Physical and chemical analyses	26
2.1.2 Biological activity	26
2.1.3 Microbial community structure	27
2.2 Materials and methods used in testing natural and synthetic herbicides	29
2.2.1 Plants used as natural herbicides sources	29
2.2.2 Natural herbicides production and analyses	37
2.2.3 Preliminary soil tests and experimental conditions	42
2.2.4 Experiment one: short and medium-term response of soil microorganisms to essential oils with phytotoxic potential extracted from mediterranean plants	45
2.2.5 Experiment two: medium term response of soil microorganisms to aqueous extracts with phytotoxic potential extracted from mediterranean plants.....	48
2.2.6 Experiment three: short, medium and long-term response of soil microorganisms to natural and synthetic herbicides.....	50
2.3 Materials and methods used in study of physical practices.....	55
2.3.1 Experiment four: long-term comparison between tillage and mulching effects on soil biological properties	55
3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	58
3.1 Essential oils composition and main chemical components properties	58
3.1.1 <i>Eriosephalus africanus</i> L.	58
3.1.2 <i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> Dehnh.	63
3.1.3 <i>Citrus reticulata</i> Blanco	69
3.1.4 <i>Thymbra capitata</i> (L.) Cav.	72
3.2 Experiment one: short and medium-term response of soil microorganisms to essential oils with phytotoxic potential extracted from mediterranean plants	74
3.2.1 Water and Fitoil	74
3.2.3 Essential oils treatments	78

3.3	Experiment two: medium-term response of soil microorganisms to aqueous extracts with phytotoxic potential extracted from mediterranean plants.....	108
3.4	Experiment three: short, medium and long-term response of soil microorganisms to natural and synthetic herbicides	112
3.4.1	Water and Fitoil.....	112
3.4.2	Water and Oxyfluorfen.....	116
3.4.3	Essential Oils and Pure Compound.....	121
3.5	Experiment four: long-term comparison between tillage and mulching effects on soil biological properties	140
4	CONCLUSIONS.....	144
4.1	Experiment one.....	144
4.2	Experiment two	145
4.3	Experiment three.....	145
4.4	Experiment four	145
4.5	Final remarks.....	146
5	BIBLIOGRAPHY	147