

GOOD GARDENING PRACTICES DISCOURAGE PESTS

To avoid or reduce the need for pesticides in your home garden, it's smart to follow good gardening practices that keep your soil & plants healthy and that discourage pests from multiplying:

- ✱ **Healthy soil equals healthy plants. Test your soil. Enrich and add what is needed. Add organic matter to soil. Contact your County Extension office for help with soil testing and improvement.**
- ✱ **Select plants native to or adapted to your climate and soils**
- ✱ **Do not crowd plants – crowding weakens plants & decreases air circulation – this promotes disease organisms & other pests.**
- ✱ **Avoid overwatering or underwatering.**
- ✱ **Fertilize properly**
 - **Too little fertilizer = weak plants susceptible to pests**
 - **Too much fertilizer = injures plants & causes water pollution**



more gardening tips ...

- ✱ **Control weeds – use mulches, hand pulling, or mowing/cutting when possible**
- ✱ **Control pests before they become a problem – remove insects or diseased leaves by hand as soon as you see them.**
- ✱ **Practice good garden sanitation – remove dead vegetation, leaf piles, etc., that can harbor or overwinter pests.**

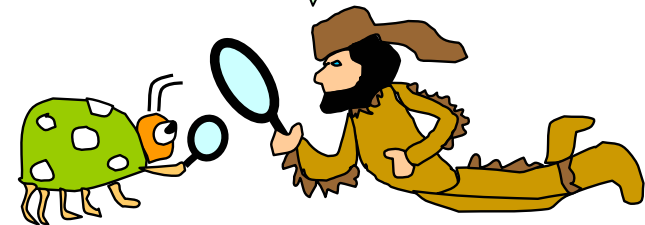


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Pesticide Safety – It's Common Sense

Before You Buy
A Pesticide:
Helpful Tips for
Home Gardeners



WVU SAFETY & HEALTH EXTENSION
CONSUMER PESTICIDE SAFETY
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ASK YOURSELF "DO I REALLY NEED A PESTICIDE?"



Just because you see insects, it does not mean insects are the problem. Identify the real problem before you select a pesticide. Your WVU County Extension office can help you.



Are your plants healthy? Pests often attack plants that are weak or unhealthy.



Is the damage really caused by a pest? Is it weather damage? Too much or too little watering? Fertilizer burn or weed-killer damage?



If it *is* a pest, *what kind is it?* Insects? Slugs? Deer, moles, birds, or other large animals? Fungus? Bacteria? Weeds?



Are there non-chemical ways to control the pest?



Is the damage severe enough to spend money on pesticides? Is the plant's value to you worth the cost of chemical treatment?



Will a chemical control the pest at this stage in its life cycle? For example, a "pre-emergent" weed-killer won't do any good if weeds have already sprouted.



Are there concerns about harvesting edible plants if you use chemicals?

IF YOU REALLY NEED A PESTICIDE, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO FIRST, BEFORE BUYING?



READ LABELS CAREFULLY FIRST, before choosing.



Choose the least toxic product for the job.



Make sure the product will kill the pest(s) you've identified.



Make sure the product is safe for use on the plant.



NEVER use pesticides on edible plants unless the label says you can do so, and then FOLLOW DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY.



What are the hazards to children or pets? water or fish? wildlife? beneficial insects? ripe vegetables or fruits?



Do you have the application equipment and the protective clothing & gear required by the label? If not, do you want to spend money to buy it?



Is the pesticide ready-mixed? If not, will it be difficult or messy to measure, mix, & load?



Carefully read disposal directions. Can you properly dispose of the chemical & container? Or will you have extra costs or possible hazards?



Buy only as much as you need. Excess pesticides create problems of storage, disposal, product stability, breakdown of containers.



Pesticide users are bound *by law* to follow label directions – so read the label carefully before purchase, before each use, and before storage or disposal.

HOW CAN HOME GARDENERS AVOID OR REDUCE THE NEED FOR PESTICIDES?



flip for some tips ↗