



INSECT & OTHER PESTS

Aphids: Healthy, vigorously growing plants can tolerate low to moderate buildup. Newly planted and weak plants suffer more. Scout for aphids. Remove by spraying a strong jet of water to knock them off. Predator insects are particularly helpful in late season. Certain weather conditions can wipe them out over night.

Thrips: Very tiny. Prefer soft tissue such as new flower buds and leaves. Control by spraying with a strong jet of water. Properly remove heavily infected plants or plant parts. Can be difficult to remove because they are so small and usually hidden in blooms or foliage.

Cutworms: Manage weeds, protect young plants by placing a can or paper cup (with both ends cut out) around the plants. Handpick cutworms at night.

Leaf Miners: Category of insects that are found inside the leaf of plants leaving a trail look on the leaf surface. Remove and destroy infected leaves. Neem oil can be applied to leaf surfaces to prevent adults from laying eggs on plant surface. Once the larvae are inside the leaf, there is no way of controlling the insect (only removal and disposal of leaf or plant).

Slugs and Snails: Mollusks that can quickly defoliate plants and leave behind a slimy trail. Remove by handpicking, use containers of beer that attract the pest, the pest falls into the beer and drowns. Diatomaceous earth in rings around plants is also used.

Japanese Beetle: Also a lawn pest (one of the white grubs). Adult attacks plants. Prevent by not bringing in infested soil. Remove by handpicking. Natural pyrethrin is also used to control Japanese Beetles.

Whiteflies: Usually found in large numbers; when plant is disturbed, whiteflies come out in a smoke-like appearance. Removing heavily infested leaves or plants can cut down populations. Yellow sticky traps can also be used. Plants can be hosed off with water and neem extracts can be used for control.

Striped and Spotted Cucumber Beetles: Particularly troublesome pest to Cucurbits (Vine crops like cucumbers and melons), mainly because it causes plant damage and spreads diseases. Pest control can be effective by placing light clothes over cucurbit plants that block out the insect but still let light and air in. These crop covers can also help with frost protection and moisture retention in the soil.

Squash Bugs: Cause much damage to Cucurbits. Feeding squash bug nymphs and adults cause vine crops to wilt. Squash bugs also spread Bacterial Wilt, a disease that causes plants to die. Bugs can also feed on fruit of Cucurbits. Adults are very difficult to control. Control is much more effective when bugs are younger. Control without chemicals is very difficult, however, there are a few natural predators that attack squash bugs. Also, removing and destroying plant debris during and after the growing season can prevent over-wintering of squash bug adults.

Botrytis: Common fungal disease that forms on fruits, leaves, and flowers. Control by removing spent flowers and other dead plant material, always remove any infected plant material, keep water off of foliage and blooms when watering.



Powdery Mildew: Common fungal disease that has a “powder” appearance. Proliferates in areas with no air movement, high humidity, and shade. Air circulation can be improved by thinning out crowded plants. As with all diseases, remove and dead or infected plant material.

BENEFICIAL INSECTS

Ladybugs (Lady Beetles): Both beetles and larvae feed on aphids, mealybugs, and eggs of many insect eggs. Often fly away, unless kept in a cage for a few days or released at night can help contain them somewhat.

Lacewings: Adults feed on nectar and pollen, but LARVAE devour aphids, leafhoppers, thrips, and many other insects as well as mites.

Dragonflies/Damsel Bugs: Both NYMPHS and ADULTS feed on aphids and leafhoppers.

Hoverflies: Feed on thrips, aphids, and other plant sucking insects.

Assassin Bugs: Feed on a wide variety of pests.

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Information on Vegetables: <http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/veggies/>