Managing Home Vegetable Garden Pests

It is a good time to think about pest control for your home vegetable garden.

You can control pest problems, and perhaps prevent future difficulties, in your garden by doing some advance planning and following a few simple Integrated Pest Management practices. IPM promotes minimal pesticide use and emphasizes the use of all available pest control methods including cultural, mechanical and biological practices to prevent pest problems.

Examples of the IPM approach include using plants with natural disease tolerance or resistance, using mulch to control weeds or row covers to prevent insect damage and using naturally occurring organisms such as lady beetles or praying mantises.

Sanitation is another good IPM practice. Keep your garden well-groomed during active growth. Once you spot diseased plant material, remove it immediately to keep diseases from spreading.

Also, promptly remove vegetable plants when they cease to be productive. Although you should clear out unproductive vegetable plants from the garden area, you can add this plant material to a compost pile.

Before you buy seeds, plants or fertilizer, start your garden off right by doing a soil test to determine if soil fertility and acidity/alkalinity will meet plants’ nutrient requirements.

Soil test results will let you know how much fertilizer your plants need to have adequate nutrients, while preventing excessive use that contributes to groundwater, stream and lake pollution.

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Plants that are stressed or weak from insufficient nutrients or a pH that’s too low or too high are more susceptible to disease and can’t readily tolerate insect damage. To give your plants a healthy start, soil test and apply the fertilizer and other amendments according to the recommendations.

Do you plant your garden crops in the same spot year after year? If so, think about rotating things this year. Crop rotation can help prevent insect and disease build-ups. For example, potatoes, eggplant, tomatoes and peppers are subject to the same insect and disease problems. So, you shouldn’t plant these crops in the same location more than every three consecutive years.

After three years, switch to a different crop like beans or corn. If you have limited garden space, plant some vegetable plants in containers such as large pots or half whisky barrels as a form of crop rotation.

To help you remember, you can make a diagram of your garden each year to avoid planting the same, or closely related crops, too frequently in the same spot.

Whether you are planting corn or tomatoes, check to see that the variety you are planting has some disease resistance or tolerance. For example, select tomato varieties labeled “VFN,” as they’re resistant to Verticillium Wilt, Fusarium and root-knot nematodes. Whereas, a tomato variety leveled “V” is only resistant to Verticillium Wilt.

Don’t buy the cheapest transplants. When it comes to transplants, the best buys are the healthy ones. A healthy transplant was seeded at the right time, grown at the proper temperature and received adequate light and moisture. It will have a compact growth structure with very small distances between leaves. The leaves will be dark green, large and upright with no tendency to droop. Stems will be pencil thick and rigid.

Avoid transplants that are beginning to produce flowers or fruit. It might seem that buying a plant with blooms or fruit will give you a head start in the garden. However, plants trying to produce fruit or flowers are slow to develop the good root systems needed to support later fruit production. Never buy plants that have insects present or are showing disease symptoms.

Plan on using mulch to prevent weeds that will decrease your garden’s production by competing with the vegetable plants for water, nutrients and sunlight. In addition, some weeds harbor diseases and insects that attack vegetable plants. Mulch also helps conserve soil moisture.

Several types of commercial mulch are available, or you can use newspapers for the mulch. Start with five to eight layers, adding more layers as the newspapers decompose to prevent weed growth throughout the growing season. Most newspapers use soy-ink, but you still need avoid using the glossy inserts.

Sources: Richard Durham, UK horticulture specialist
The KSU Autoclave will be at the Perry County Extension Office on Tuesday April 17th. Beekeepers can get their hive components sterilized between the hours of 3 p.m. until 7 p.m. Please call the Extension Office (606-436-2044) to reserve your time slot, it takes approx. 30 minutes to sterilize your hives. For any questions regarding the autoclave contact Charles May at the Perry County Extension Service.
Don't Forget Sprayer Maintenance During Spring Cleaning

Remember to include sprayer maintenance in your spring cleaning tasks. It will ensure that your spray equipment is ready for the planting season, and save you time and money down the road.

Taking care of sprayer maintenance prior to the hectic growing season can prevent time-consuming equipment breakdowns, higher chemical costs, reduced pesticide effectiveness and potential crop damage.

Poorly maintained sprayers can cause variations in pesticide application rates. These variations can lead to ineffective pest control and potential crop injury, resulting in higher chemical costs and reduced profits. Precise pesticide application is even more important with the highly active agricultural chemicals we have on the market today.

**Make the following a part of your spray equipment cleaning chore:**

- Rinse out the sprayer to remove any dirt that accumulated over the winter.
- Check the pump for excessive wear and to be sure it is operating at full capacity.
- Inspect sprayer lines for leaks.
- Visually inspect nozzles for excessive wear, corrosion or damage.
- Measure the output from each nozzle to ensure uniform application.
- Visually inspect spray from each nozzle to find any inconsistent patterns resulting from wear or damage.
- Clean filter screens and replace worn ones.
- Check the agitator for proper turbulence to ensure specific formulations are well mixed.
- On a driveway or other appropriate site, use water to check spray patterns for proper overlap.
- Inspect electrical connections on sprayer controllers for corroded or loose wires

Source: Tim Stombaugh, UK Agricultural Engineer
High Tunnel Workshop

April 18, 2018
10:00 am

Workshop Location:
Holiday Farm & Garden
18354 KY Hwy 476
Hazard, KY 41701

For more information contact:
Charles May, CEA for Ag & Natural Resources, Perry County Extension, 606-436-2044
or
Chad Conway, CEA for Ag & Natural Resources, Knott County Extension, 606-785-5329

Important Dates to Remember

April 6  Successful Gardening Class @ Knott CES 2:00 pm
April 12 Berry Growers Workshop @ Knott CES 1:00 pm
April 17 KSU Autoclave @Perry CES 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm
April 18 High Tunnel Workshop @Holiday Farm & Garden 10:00 am
April 24 Knott Co Ag Development Council Mtg 5:30 pm
May 24 KRADD Senior Games @Sportsplex
May 28 Memorial Day - Knott CES closed
June 14 Basic Furniture Upcycling (collaborative program with Linda Combs FCS Agent. @ Knott CES 10:00 am
June 28-30 Knott County Fair @Sportsplex
Berry Growers Workshop

Thursday, April 12, 2018 @ 1:00 pm
Knott Co Extension Service - Multipurpose Building
149 Parks Branch Rd, Hindman, KY 41822

Classes to include:
- Berry Disease and Insect Control
- Knott Co. Soil Conservation Cost Share Presentation

Featured speaker:
Nicole W Gauthier, Extension Plant Pathologist & Ric Bessin, Extension Entomology Professor

*** Blueberry Plants & other door prizes to be given away! ***

For more information and to register for this, contact Chad Conway at cconway@uky.edu (606) 785-5329.

Join us at the Knott Co Extension Service for...

Successful Gardening Class

Friday, April 6, 2018
2:00 p.m.
Vegetable Seeds Available
While supplies last to those who attend the class.

Sponsored by...
Knott Co Cooperative Extension Service & Knott Co Soil Conservation District
Mark Your Calendar...

**KNOTT COUNTY FAIR**

Thursday - Saturday

**June 28th - 30th**

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**Honey**
- Dark
- Amber
- Light
- Honey Combs

**Largest**
- Tomato

**Largest**
- Cabbage

**Youth Rabbit Show**
Beefy Stuffed Peppers

1 cup uncooked
1/4 teaspoon ground
1 small onion, diced
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup cooked ground beef
1 tablespoon chopped green
1/4 cup tomato sauce
1/2 cup mozzarella cheese

Cook: Cook meat and onion in 150°F oven; straddle with pepper.

Yield: 4 servings.

Nutritional Analysis: 380 calories, 15 g fat, 38 g protein, 7 g dietary fiber.

1/2 cup diced green peppers
1/4 cup diced yellow bell peppers
1/4 cup diced red bell peppers
1/4 cup minced garlic
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1/4 cup chopped green onion

Combine all ingredients; mix well and fill with pepper.

Baking Noy: Pour into the pan of your choice, and bake until heated through.

Nutritional Analysis: 260 calories, 6 g fat, 32 g protein, 7 g dietary fiber.

1 small onion, diced
1/2 cup of cooked ground beef
1/2 cup of minced garlic
1/4 cup of diced bell peppers
1/4 cup of diced green onions

Combine all ingredients; mix well and place in pepper.

Baking Noy: Place into the oven and bake until heated through.

Nutritional Analysis: 350 calories, 10 g fat, 30 g protein, 5 g dietary fiber.