



## News Release

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### GARDEN PESTS TO LOOK FOR IN JULY

When it comes to pests, it is best to prevent them if you can. This means knowing what insects and diseases and their damage looks like. For example, aphids can be feeding in the top of one of your prized tall trees. How would you know they were there unless you also knew that aphids also produce a sticky material called honey dew that falls out of the tree onto your car? As a knowledgeable gardener, you would know that aphids are causing this and it's time to take action. The next year, you are even more seasoned, and are on the lookout for the aphids again before they cause damage, and can take preventative measures. This is where you want to be as a gardener managing pests. Being ahead of the game often allows you to use least toxic options in controlling pests.

For the month of July, be diligent, and look out for these pests.

- *Hollyhock rust*: look for orange-brown pustules underneath the leaf. Clean up dropped, dead leaves, and spray with a registered fungicide, currently chlorothalonil, sulfur or neem oil.
- *Early blight on tomatoes*: lesion with dark border and gray center on leaves. Cultural controls such as proper irrigation, fertilization, plant spacing and crop rotation will generally keep this disease in check and fungicides will not be necessary.
- *Late blight on tomatoes*: small, water-soaked areas that rapidly enlarge to form purple-brown, oily-appearing blotches. Control weeds, especially nightshades, and pick off any leaves that touch the ground.
- *Aphids*: monitor trees shrubs and vines. Look for sticky honeydew and ants on a mission.
- *Cabbageworm and cabbage looper*: on plants in the cabbage family, the caterpillar chews large, irregular holes in leaves. The worm is green and has a velvet appearance. After 2 to 3 weeks of feeding, larvae pupate; pupae are green with faint yellow lines down the

back and sides. The adult cabbage butterfly is white with one to four black spots on the wings; they are often seen fluttering around the fields. The whitish, rocket-shaped eggs are laid singly on the undersides of leaves. Spray *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT) for control.

- *Spider mites on everything*: Dusty looking foliage, loss of color. Smack a small branch against a piece of white paper and see if the specks of dust crawl around. If they do, you have an infestation of spider mites. You can wash them off with a string stream of water. If that doesn't seem to work, come see us, there are several pesticides that can be used for control.
- *Fruit trees*: Look out for anything unusual, and come see us if there is. There are too many potential problems associated with fruit trees to go into detail here.
- *Sunburn on fruits and leaves*: with the hot, intense weather we have been experiencing, some exposed fruit may be getting damaged if it exposed to intense sunlight, especially if it is adjacent to reflective light colored surfaces. Look for sunburn on raspberry, grape, pepper and tomato.

Consider solarization:

**Solarization** is a technique by which clear plastic is placed on top of the soil to raise the soil temperature to kill weed seeds, as well as other disease causing organisms and nematodes. Periods of high temperature such as what we have been experiencing recently are ideal conditions for solarization. In general, 4 to 6 weeks of soil heating during the warmest time of the year is sufficient to control most soil pests. In some cases, such as in cooler, windier, or cloudier locations, or if there are pests that are harder to control, it may be necessary to leave the plastic in place 6 to 8 weeks.

If you have a pest problem, feel free to bring it into the store, we will do everything we can to solve it for you. Simply place it in a sealed plastic bag. We will be having a special plant clinic on Friday, July 3 at 10 am at Moose Valley Farms. Bring your samples and questions! More information: 267-5108.

*Mike Bauer is the Horticulturist for Moose Valley Farms, a full-service garden center located on Hwy 95 in Naples at mile marker 495. Please feel free to call us at 267-5108 or stop in if you have any questions.*