

# Community Garden News

**Q. What pests bothered your crops last year? What methods did you use to slow or stop damage? Which was more successful, you or the pests?**

I tried to fight the flea beetles with soapy water on kale, kohlrabi, cabbage and basil, with slow results...

Mexican bean beetles and flea beetles seem to be consistent issues. I use only organic methods, so I usually hand pick bean beetles, eggs and larvae. I can usually do this enough to allow the plants to produce a crop, but by that time, the beetles have pretty much eaten everything so as soon as I harvest I pull the plants. Often I go on vacation and miss a couple of generations, and then it is hard to catch up. Flea beetles definitely won on my potatoes last year. I am looking into other organic pest control methods like neem oil and may try some new things this year. I've been tempted to bring temporary fencing and a couple of my chickens and let them hang out for an afternoon while I am working and help me with insect control! Not sure that would be allowed though, and a little challenging logistically.

Bean bugs were eating the leaves. I just used hand killing, and hope the wasp or some kinds of insect can come to eat them. Not much damage though.

The Mexican bean beetle (*Epilachna varivestis*) was the worst, and they sucked the life out of each leaf of green beans especially, leaving only the "skeleton". I'm reading that Diatomaceous Earth will kill them, and netting is very effective but a lot of work if you're picking repeatedly. I'm going to try to plant early and be done early as they are worst in mid summer. Maybe also plant late, but I don't know if that will work in this short season.

Later in the season, fallish, I put in some new flower bulbs and within a week they were gone I talked with Gene, gardener on the east side, and he said it was probably raccoon mischief. I read up on deterrents for raccoons and am going to try using dog fur over the planted bulbs with mulch on top. Luckily no other pests on veggies last year.

Small fleas were a problem – used a spray and also a white cloth cover.

*More Q & A on the next page*

Dear Gardeners,

Have you noticed the cooler out front of the garden this week?

If you would like to donate ANY produce, they would be very appreciative. Please put your extras in the cooler before 8AM on Thursdays. No donation is too small, they will even pick up for one tomato! Every bit counts. If this is successful this year, perhaps we could all invest a little time growing a couple extra plants for those in need.

Thank you,

Allison Appelhans

Garden Coordinator

## C o n t e n t s

Q & A

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Weed ID

**Q. What are the usual varieties that you would recommend? Anything new you would like to try this season?**

We like the Heirloom Black Krim tomatoes, they never gave us any trouble. National Pickling Cucumbers give you a nice harvest, if picked regularly.

Last year I tried broccoli, as well as shelling peas and sweet potatoes, and will have these again this year.

Garlic and winter squash. I will like to do as much as possible. Diversity is good for health and good for the environment.

Have had good luck with garlic, onions, broccoli, summer and winter squash, basil, carrots, and some years tomatoes.

**Q. What plants will you grow again?**

We will try this year again red potatoes with better care, they tasted good but the harvest was little.

If the licorice plant survives the winter, we will pamper it and may seed more.

We tried Heritage raspberries last year, and we need to see how they are doing in our climate.

Will try red bean, okra, beans.

We'll try some more cherry tomatoes for the flavor and abundant crop. We tried several heirloom tomatoes, but were very disappointed.

Hate to say it, but Early Girls were the earliest, healthiest and most productive the longest. We'll grow more for sure. Tried potatoes with no luck and also no luck with Brussel sprouts.

## Community Service

Thank you to those of you who helped on our planned group work day. Dietmar, Bibi and Leslie were super helpful weeding the blueberry cage, and thinning out some of the pollinator strip on the east side of the garden.

If you still need to complete volunteer hours, please consider weeding a specific area. NOT the most exciting task, but it is perhaps one of the most important!

***Please weed around your plots and remove the weed material to the compost dumpster.***



## Healthy Garden Tips

### ***Troubleshooting Tomato Problems***

What's wrong with my tomatoes?  
*Learn how to diagnose and treat...*

FRESH, vine-ripened tomatoes are one of the great joys of summer. However, sometimes diseases, pests and or environmental stresses get in the way of our tomato harvests.

#### Signs and Symptoms

- Black sunken areas on fruit
- Few flowers or flowers drop
- Dark, concentric spots
- Water-soaked lesions
- Cracks in fruit
- Yellowed, distorted leaves
- Wilted foliage
- Holes in leaves and fruit
- Collapsing fruit



The best way to avoid tomato troubles is to start with healthy plants. They are better able to fend off diseases and pests than stressed or weak plants. Choose a planting site in full sun and keep the soil evenly moist throughout the season. Provide a steady source of nutrients, too. At planting time, add a granular fertilizer that's made for tomatoes, such as our Gardener's Best Organic Tomato Fertilizer. During the growing season, treat your plants to a water-soluble fertilizer.

Even the best-cared-for plants can be plagued by problems. Diagnosing the culprit is the first step — is it a disease? An insect? An environmental condition? Here are some of the most common tomato problems and recommended solutions. Keep in mind that problems with your tomatoes will depend on many factors, including your soil and climate, as well as localized disease and insect pest outbreaks. Consult your cooperative extension system office for more information.



#### Signs and Symptoms

Fruit with black sunken areas on the blossom end are a sign of **blossom-end rot**. Although it looks like a disease, blossom-end rot is caused by a calcium deficiency, usually aggravated by drought or uneven watering, root damage and/or excess nitrogen. Fortunately, blossom-end rot will usually occur on just a small number of fruit, especially at the beginning of the harvest season. To prevent it, provide sufficient water to plants to keep soil moist throughout the

growing season and apply a thick layer of straw mulch to help conserve soil moisture. You can also combat the problem with a ready-to-use spray called Rot-Stop, which is an all-natural formula for blossom-end rot.

Dark, concentrically ringed spots that cover the lower leaves and stems are a sign of **early blight**. To prevent and control the spread of blight, spray with Actinovate or Copper Fungicide. Also, limit the spread of the disease by not getting water on the leaves when watering and not handling plants when they are wet.



Early blight disease on a tomato leaf, indicated by the concentric rings.

Water-soaked patches and lesions on stems, foliage and fruit are signs of **late blight**. Outbreaks spread quickly under favorable conditions because the pathogen can produce huge numbers of wind-dispersed spores. When late blight is detected in your region, consider preventative spraying with Actinovate or Copper Fungicide.



Late blight disease can manifest as blackened stems and foliage.

Cracks in fruit are generally caused by uneven watering. Use a soaker hose to apply water to the soil, and moistening the entire root zone each time you water. Apply mulch to help retain moisture.

Yellowed, distorted and curled leaves may be a sign of an infestation of **aphids**. Check for aphids on the undersides of leaves or clustered on new growth. Aphids are easily controlled with a strong jet of water or an application of neem oil. Distorted, yellowed leaves can also signal **tobacco mosaic virus**. To prevent tobacco mosaic virus, wash hands thoroughly after smoking or using other tobacco products before heading to the garden. Infected plants should be removed to the trash.

Wilting foliage might be a sign of insufficient water. But if the lower leaves are wilted and plants are stunted and do not recover after watering, fusarium wilt is likely the cause. Infected plants should be removed to the trash.

Holes chewed in leaves and fruits can indicate the presence of a tomato horn worm. This large caterpillar has white diagonal stripes and a black horn projecting from the rear. Handpick these caterpillars (drop them in soapy water as you pick them). More information on tomato horn worm. Holes chewed in tomatoes can be the work of slugs. There is nothing worse than picking a tomato and finding a slug happily working its way through it. Slugs can be thwarted with iron phosphate-based slug pellets and beneficial nematodes.

Small holes in fruit and tomatoes that collapse when you pick them might be the work of tomato fruit worms. These moth larvae bore into fruits and consume them from within. Once the larvae are in the fruit, the only remedy is to destroy the infected fruit. If fruit worms are a severe problem in your area, start the plants under row covers and keep them covered until they flower.

<https://www.gardeners.com/how-to/tomato-pests/5086.html>

## Community Critters

### *Pests to Consider*

**Japanese beetle:** Peak period.

**Peach tree borer:** Egg laying typically begins. Preventive sprays should be made at this time to kill newly hatching larvae.

**Colorado potato beetle:** Peak period of larval injury. End of first generation.

**"Tomato" horn worms:** Peak damage by larvae occurs over the next month.

**Potato/tomato psyllid:** Symptoms begin to appear on potatoes and tomatoes.

**Mexican bean beetle:** Larvae begin to damage beans.

Consider trying DE on insect pests. Diatomaceous earth – is a naturally occurring, soft, siliceous sedimentary rock consisting of fossilized remains of diatoms, a type of hard-shelled protist (chrysophytes). Diatomite is used as an insecticide, due to its abrasive and physico-sorptive properties. The fine powder absorbs lipids from the waxy outer layer of insects' exoskeletons, causing them to dehydrate. Arthropods die as a result of the water pressure deficiency.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diatomaceous\\_earth#Pest\\_control](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diatomaceous_earth#Pest_control)



# CAN YOU ID THESE WEEDS?



Puncture Vine/ annual



Hoary Cress / perennial



Canada Thistle / perennial



Redstem Filigree/ annual



Bindweed / perennial



Cheat Grass/ annual



Quackgrass / perennial



Purslane / annual

**Annual weeds** spread throughout your garden by seed. They live only one season and are generally easier to get rid of through pulling and stopping seed production. They may self-seed or they may be brought into the garden by birds, 4-legged animals or by sticking to your clothing as you walk by.

**Perennial weeds** are the most difficult to get rid of. They spread by both seed and creeping roots and if you don't pull the entire root, the plant can actually reproduce from every little root piece left behind. You'll have similar problems with perennial weeds that grow very deep, and have hard to remove taproots. This means that hoeing and tilling are not good choices for removing these perennial weeds. Hand weeding will work if you are **very thorough** about getting the whole plant and root system. Sometimes herbicides are the only solution for eradicating tough perennial weeds.