

Home Remedies for Insect, Fungus, and Mold Control

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If you are reluctant to use commercially made organic products to help control the myriad insect pests and fungus/molds that attack your vegetable plants, you might find some of the following useful. No guarantees!

For bug, beetle, moth, and butterfly eggs and larva that you will find under leaves and in folded sections of leaves:

1. Insects “breathe” through tiny holes called spiracles in their sides, so dusting them with such things as wood ash or cornstarch will cause suffocation. Puff, or fling the powder on and under leaves when the plant is dry.
2. Create your own bug sprays with the following recipes:
 - A. Dish Soap: 1 teaspoon dish soap in a pint size spray bottle of water.
 - B. Oil of oregano and oil of peppermint: ½ teaspoon each in a pint size spray bottle of water. See Marcia who has the oils.
 - C. Artificial vanilla flavoring: 1 teaspoon in a pint size spray bottle of water.

For bug and beetle larvae that live in the soil and climb up on the plant:

Some of the following work by getting into the spiracles, or deter by odor or texture/touch: used coffee grounds mixed with baking soda, wood ash, cut-up pungent herbs such as sage, oregano, thyme, rosemary. Put on the soil in a circle around the plant stem.

Fungus and Molds:

One way to reduce molds and fungus is, immediately on planting, mulch young plants with straw or coastal hay. Many of the spores of molds and fungus come from the ground and are carried to the plant by splashing as you water the plants.

Both Insect and Fungus Damage:

Cut off the parts of the plant that are bug eaten or are moldy to prevent damage from spreading. The plants will usually continue to grow if they have well-established roots.

Good luck. It is not easy to be a farmer.