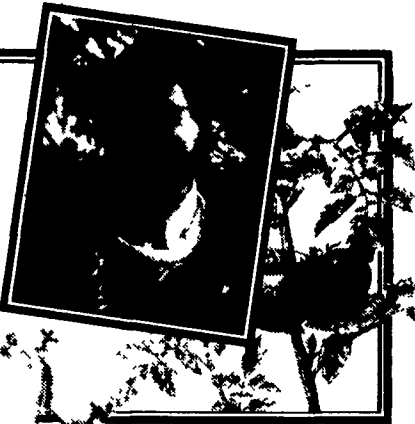


**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
Tom Becker



**COMMON SENSE
GARDENING**

This is the first in a series of articles on diagnosing and reducing pests in the garden. Serious disease and insect pests problems require quick identification and treatments.

Do you have a dying dogwood? Sick squash? Ill impatiens? Terminal turf? Don't know what's causing your plant problems? A pesticide may or may not be the solution.

Prudent gardeners won't wait for signs of damage before checking for insect and disease pests. For insects, look for eggs or egg masses on the undersides of leaves, and for the young insects on the leaves, stems and fruit. For diseases, look for bull's eye type spots with fungal spots in the center or blackened stem.

Before applying any pesticides, first identify the pest. Not all pesticides are effective against all garden pests and indiscriminate use of pesticides can be worse than using none at all.

But how do you spot the pesky bugs. Consider the damage bugs leave behind. Stunted vegetable plants, or plants that wilt during the day even with adequate water, may be infested with insects, like squash vine borers, root maggots, squash bugs, or white grubs. Imported cabbage worm, tomato horn worm and corn earworm leave gelatinous dark-green pellets of excrement on leaves, stems, and fruit. The squash vine borer entry hole exudes yellow sawdust-like frass as the pest tunnels within vines and stems.

Small round holes in the leaves may be the work of flea beetles, while winding trails on dead leaf tissue are an indication of leafminers. Flea beetles, a tiny black in-

sect, jump away when disturbed. Piercing, sucking insects such as thrips, aphids, leafhoppers, or spider mites cause leaves to turn yellow, brown, or look blotchy. Early injury appears as small yellow or white spots or stippling on the leaves.

Aphids are actually easy to spot. These soft-bodied, pear-shaped insects live on the undersides of leaves and the succulent parts of stems. They don't move when disturbed. Another indication of aphids could be the presence of ants on the plants: some species feed on aphid honeydew. Whenever ants are about, aphids are probably close by.

For disease problems in the garden, a clinic at Penn State is equipped to diagnose plant diseases caused by fungi, nematodes and microorganisms such as bacteria.

Visible symptoms might give you the first clue of a disease. But to confirm a gardener's diagnosis, the disease clinic may culture the material and look for microorganisms. For example for a tomato plant with leaf spots, the disease lab cultures a portion of the leaf in agar to see if a pathogen appears.

After lab tests are completed, a written diagnosis is returned. Copies of test results also are sent electronically to your county Extension office if you reside in Pennsylvania. This enables county extension professionals to stay abreast of disease problems and trends affecting growers and gardeners in their areas.

"We often see patterns emerge," said John Peplinski, the disease clinic coordinator.

"For instance, during late summer of 1994, we received a lot of diseased tomato samples from various areas of the state. As a result, the lab diagnosed several cas-



NEXT LANE PLEASE

MAMMA's supermarket check-out sign is certain to remind Mom or Dad of the consequences of returning home from food shopping without ice cream.

**Supermarket Check-Out Sign
To Enhance Ice Cream Sales**

TOWSON, MD—As the weather heats up so do ice cream sales, and the Middle Atlantic Milk Marketing Association (MAMMA) has a new merchandising tool to remind shoppers to purchase their favorite frozen treat. It's a sign featuring a young girl sitting in front of an empty bowl of ice cream. The grumpy expression on her face, coupled with the message printed on the

sign calls out to the shopper, "You Forgot My Ice Cream."

The colorful 11"x8" sign is positioned at the end of a closed check out lane. In addition to the message in support of ice cream, the shopper also is informed to search for a check-out that is in operation.

The check-out placard is the newest item in MAMMA's long-term point-of-sale (POS) program. This program includes milk price boards used on top of the dairy-case; door signs that post the hours

that a store is open; counter pads used at convenience stores; and temperature reminders for milk and ice cream for cooler doors with each item carrying a dairy promotion message.

By providing items that are useful to the retailer MAMMA not only achieves broad acceptance of the POS materials by supermarkets, but is assured that these items will remain on display for a long time. As a result, more consumers are influenced by that dairy product message.

es of late blight, a serious disease of tomatoes and potatoes."

If you have a plant disease or insect problem, contact your county extension office. In York County, our new phone number is (717) 840-7408.

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