

# #bepesticidefree

## problem pests in the garden

**Aphids** are small, soft-bodied insects that suck plant juices out of plants, trees and leaves.

**Solutions:** Try washing them off with a strong stream of water from a hose or pressure washer. Doing this once or twice a week should do the trick.



You could also try encouraging ladybugs into your lawn or garden by planting umbrella shaped flowers such as fennel, dill, cilantro, caraway, angelica, tansy, wild carrot & yarrow. Other plants that also attract ladybugs include cosmos (especially the white ones), coreopsis, scented geraniums, and dandelions.

**Cabbage worms** are small light green caterpillars that change



into small white butterflies in their adult stage. These worms will affect the entire cabbage family but prefers cabbage and cauliflower. In the garden, they frequently damage turnips, kale, collards, radishes, and mustard. In the flower garden they will harm the alyssum and nasturtium.

**Solutions:** The best solution is floating row covers, a light fibrous cloth that lets in light and water but keeps out the pests. Try using a trap crop. Plant some canola early in another part of the garden. It will lure the butterflies away. When the canola is infested, pull it up and compost it. Start your cabbage inside and plant it out after mid-June.

## How to deal with Pests

- Use physical barriers such as floating row covers, or put tin cans with the bottoms cut out around plants.
- Use a forceful spray of water to knock insects off the plant.
- Lure and trap.
- Squish the insect or handpick and drop in soapy water.
- Use homemade sprays such as soapy water (dissolve 2 tbsp of soap flakes in 1 litre of water), or garlic oil spray (dissolve 1 tsp of liquid dish soap in 600 ml of water, add 2 tsp of mineral oil and 3 cloves of minced garlic, let stand for 24 hours).



Working for a Sustainable Future

www.environmentalsociety.ca  
info@environmentalsociety.ca  
ph 306.665.1915  
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**Slugs** are elongated soft-bodied creatures. All slugs are similar in general appearance but vary in colour and length. Slugs prefer warm, moist conditions and they will feed on a variety of animal, green plant and fungal materials. Succulent fruit and tender leaves are their preferred hosts but slugs will also feed on root crops such as carrots and potatoes.

**Solutions:** Slugs love beer. Fill some small bowls with beer. Bury them so the top of the bowl is level with the soil surface. Leave these traps out overnight and dispose of the slugs in the morning. Slugs like to hide under old lumber in the heat of the day. If you place it around your yard, you can use it to trap slugs. Just turn it over in the afternoon, and dispose of the slugs. Slugs hate crawling over broken egg shells. Spread them around your garden.

**Leaf rollers** are caterpillars of various moths that gorge themselves on foliage and then pupate within the protection of rolled up leaves making it hard to kill them with any traditional insecticide.

**Solutions:** Examine and handpick off the culprits. Also try spraying the plants with a mixture of soapy water or garlic oil bug spray. Try it out on a few plants first to test its effectiveness.



**Apple maggots** are small white or yellowish worms found inside apples. The adult fly is black with yellow legs, and has yellow markings across the abdomen and bands that zigzag across the wings.

**Solutions:** The best way to control apple maggots is to prevent the adult fly from laying eggs. Trap them with a commercially available sticky trap. Hang these traps in target fruit trees in late June and remove them after harvest. Keep them clear of surrounding branches. Remove all fallen fruit immediately.

**Ants** may be black, brown, or reddish in colour. The most distinctive structural feature of ants is their thin waist, which connects their thorax to their abdomen (the large bulbous "tail"). Ants are social-like bees and live in large colonies. While under certain circumstances ants can be a problem, remember that for the most part, ants are a very beneficial inhabitant of your yard. Ants are fantastic predators of truly pest insects and generally turn more soil than earthworms.

**Solutions:** Nuisance ant colonies can be doused with a solution of borax. Boil one cup of water with ½ cup of sugar. Cool and add 1 tbsp of borax. Prevent the colonies by forming by keeping the lawn moist and repeatedly raking of the mounds discourages the ants. But the best technique is to attract songbirds into your yard or garden.

**To learn more about the information in this factsheet:**

Visit the University of Saskatchewan's Garden Line website:  
<http://agbio.usask.ca/gardenline>

**To learn more about alternatives to using pesticides, please see:**

The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insects and Disease  
by Fern Marshall Bradley and Barbara W. Ellis



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