

Interplanting for Pest Control

Interplanting is growing one kind of plant alongside a different kind of plant. Some plants attract helpful insects. Other plants confuse or repel insect pests. When these plants are interplanted, they can help protect each other from insect pests.

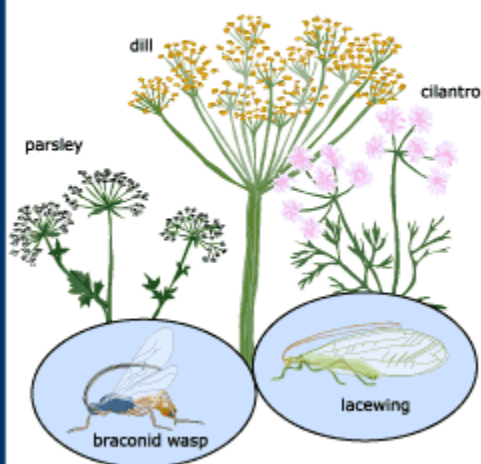
INTERPLANT TO ATTRACT AND SHELTER HELPFUL INSECTS

Most insects that eat insect pests also eat nectar and pollen from flowers. They have short mouth parts for chewing, rather than long tubes for sipping, so they need flowers with easy-to-reach nectar and pollen.

Flowers in the Aster family, such as marigolds and sunflowers, have wide, open flowers, so they are an excellent choice for attracting helpful insects.



Herbs like parsley, dill, and coriander have flat-topped clusters of small flowers. They also have strong fragrances that attract beneficial insects.



HOW TO CONFUSE OR REPEL INSECT PESTS

Many insect pests attack only certain kinds of crops. They spread more quickly if a large area is planted with only the kind of crop they eat. If you interplant crops, it's not as easy for insect pests to spread and cause damage.



A large cabbage patch presents a big target for cabbage white butterflies flying by. Also, lots of cabbages in one spot make it easier for the cabbage white butterflies to move from one cabbage to the next. The same number of cabbages scattered among other crops over a larger area is a much less obvious target.

Many gardeners interplant with herbs and flowers that have strong scents, which may confuse or repel insect pests looking for crops to feed on. Here are some combinations that many gardeners use.

Marigo
eggpla



Basil among tomatoes



Garlic among cabbage



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