



Controlling Insect Pests

You can control insect pests using physical, cultural, biological, and chemical methods. Combining a number of methods may be the best way to control insects in your garden.

Physical control includes methods such as removing insect pests by hand and using physical barriers or traps to keep insect pests away from plants.



These butterfly larvae are eating all the leaves! I'm picking them off the plants and putting them in a bucket of soapy water.

Cultural control includes carefully choosing what, how, when, and where you plant in order to avoid insect attack.

Last year insect pests destroyed my squash plants. This year insects have not been a problem because of the control methods I've used.

What did you do?

I prepared my soil well, so my plants stayed healthier and were better able to resist insect attack.

Which squash did you plant?

Summer and winter squash. I planted butternut as a winter squash because it's resistant to squash vine borer. I waited until July to plant summer squashes so they matured after the adult borers finished laying their eggs.

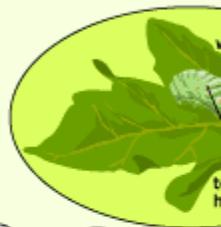
Where did you plant the crops?



Far from where squash grew last year. That way I avoided the insect pests that overwintered in the soil.

Biological control is the use of natural such as insect predators and parasites, to bring down the number of insect pests. Helpful may be released into the garden, or the attracted to the garden by certain flowers.

A parasitic wasp lays eggs inside the body of the tomato hornworm. When the eggs hatch the larvae feed on the inside of the hornworm. Then the larvae emerge and turn into pupae.



Look! A tomato hornworm covered with wasp pupae. I'll leave it in the garden. When the adults emerge, they will attack other hornworms.



Chemical control is the use of pesticides to control insect pests.

No control treatment has worked. So the gardeners may have to use this pesticide. Both the insect pest and my infested crops are listed on this label. The gardeners will read the directions carefully and use only the amount of pesticide that is needed.



Source URL: <https://www.usbg.gov/controlling-insect-pests>