

# Organic Gardening

Using natural and organic products in the home landscape is not only environmentally friendly but people/pet safe as well. Consider “going green” whenever you can, especially when it comes to edible gardening. Organic fertilizers last longer and add many micronutrients to the soil. There are a number of natural/organic solutions available for many common pests and diseases in our home landscapes. Remember the labels “OMRI” (Organic Materials Review Institute) and “CDFA” (California Department of Food and Agriculture) – these are the highest standards of organic registration in the USA. If you want to go 100% strictly organic, search for these labels. In addition to these registered products, there are a number of “natural” products available as well that are safe. Some companies choose not to go through the certification process and pay all the registration costs, and therefore denote their products as “natural” or “for use in organic gardening”.

**EB Stone products:** Sunnyside is proud to offer a full line of E.B. Stone Organics products – the highest level of quality when it comes to soils, fertilizers, and amendments. Check out our selection, we have the perfect organic food/soil for every gardening need. These are all registered “CDFA”.

**Espoma products:** We supplement our line of E.B Stone products with some useful Espoma Organic items. They offer a full range of easy-to-use, water soluble fertilizers for indoor and outdoor use. They also provide excellent houseplant potting mixes and organic ‘Lightning Lime’.

**Down to Earth products:** We carry a few Down to Earth items, mainly amendments for the vegetable garden. Their ‘Oyster Shell Lime’ is excellent for sweetening veggie soils, and ‘Azomite’ is one of the magic organic products for vegetables that makes the flavor of home-grown veggies pop.

**Organic Veggie/Herbs starts:** We strive to get all organic vegetable and herb starts, but always check with our staff on which ones are certified. In the store, we have a number of organic seeds - some from **Ed Hume**, some from **Botanical Interest**, and everything from **Deep Harvest**. Deep Harvest is a fabulous local farm on Whidbey Island that selects the best PNW veggies/herbs/flowers and offers a 100% organic seed line.

## *Weed control*

**‘Corn Gluten’** – A certified organic pre-emergent herbicide/fertilizer. Works for a season when applied to weed free areas, just be careful not to try to seed things after application.

**‘Weed Beater FE’** from Bonide– This is a “natural” and safer alternative than synthetic lawn weed killers. It is Iron based and will kill most broadleaved weeds without harming the surrounding turf.

**‘Kleen Up Botanical’** – A new formulation from Bonide that is a “natural”, non-selective weed killer. This is listed safe for veggie gardens and works well in driveways/gravel/patios/etc. as well.

**‘Burn-Out’** – A good non-selective weed and grass killer that works just about anywhere.

**Other options** – Try manually with a good tool, like the Hula-Ho. Perhaps consider a propane torch for areas in gravel and driveways – but be careful not to burn everything. Sometimes newspaper/cardboard makes a good weed cover for a period of time as well.

## *Slug Control*

**Iron Phosphate** is the go-to organic slug control. It is packaged in a number of products – look for the ‘**Sluggo**’ brand from Monterrey, or ‘Bug/Slug control’ from Bonide (contains **Spinosad** as well for broader use). The new ‘**Sluggo Maxx**’ is even better – three times the coverage due to superior new attractants.

**‘Diatomaceous Earth’** is another great organic option. It is useful for slugs as well as ants, fleas, and many other crawling insects and can be used anywhere in the garden – completely people and animal safe.

**Cocoa Mulch** is a unique mulch - 100% OMRI organic – comprised of cocoa shells. It is a good slug/snail repellent and smells chocolatey good!

## ***Mole Control***

**‘Mole Max’ from Bonide** – Natural Castor Oil encapsulated on a small clay particle. Works great at repelling moles out of turf and garden areas. Find active runs and cover one third of yard, moving out another third for the following two weeks. If you cover your property, they will stay as they have nowhere to escape the smell.

**Mole Max spikes** – Battery operated spikes from Bonide that exude chattering sounds into the soil - these are good at deterring moles. One spike covers up to 10,000 square feet.

**Traps** – Red in the face, ready for battle and want to avoid poisons/gassers/etc? Then trap the little vermin with a good old fashioned cinch trap.

## ***Insect and Disease Control***

Going green with insect and disease control is possible – the key is keeping up with problems. Being pro-active! Always read labels carefully and follow the instructions. The most important thing is to repeat sprays at the recommended intervals – many will kill only adult insects, for example – but a second or even third application at proper intervals will get the eggs and larvae meaning you win!

**‘Monterrey Horticultural Oil’** – A certified organic oil useful as a dormant spray in winter, as well as a maintenance spray for use in-season, as long it is not 90 degree weather (will burn in heat). Good for controlling many insects by smothering/cutting off oxygen to them.

**‘Monterrey Garden Insect Spray’** – An OMRI certified organic, useful spray for use in vegetable gardens, covering a wide range of insects. Contains Spinosad - excellent against caterpillars, worms, thrips, leafminers and other listed pests. You will also find **‘Captain Jack’s Deadbug Brew’** from Bonide just as useful – contains Spinosad and works just as well as the Monterrey brand.

**Apple Maggots** – Utilize maggot traps and lures to catch those pesky flies before they get into your apples. Use biodegradable sticky glue on the outside of traps – all totally non-toxic. Another option is Maggot Barriers – wrap all your little apples with their own protective cover each spring so flies cannot get to them!

**‘Revitalize’ from Bonide** – A fabulous all-purpose, bio-fungicide for use on just about anything in the garden – edibles, lawns, roses, shrubs, everything! Think fungus-eating bacteria – the Bacillus specie in the solution will prevent almost all diseases from taking hold.

**Root Weevils** – Want to get rid of those little soil creatures that crawl up at night and bite the edges of your Rhododendrons and other broadleaved plants organically? Catch them at night with a flashlight, or use **Tanglefoot** smeared on a wrap surrounding your trunks, creating a sticky barrier they cannot crawl through.

**Caterpillars** – Always go straight to the natural **‘BT’** from Bonide– a superior caterpillar killer that is safe and non-toxic. They ingest the bacteria in the solution, get sick to their stomach, and cease to feast on the remainder of your landscape. You win again without harming anything.

**‘Neem Oil’** (or ‘Rose Rx’ from Bonide) – A useful organic/natural spray that controls both insects and diseases, when used properly. A great product to have around if you want to go green – one the most versatile in the garden. There is also supercharged **‘Bon-Neem’** from Bonide – ‘Neem Oil’ with an additional touch of Pyrethrin and Piperonyl Butoxide – both organic compounds.

**‘Insecticidal Super Soap’ from Bonide** – Another traditional natural/organic spray from Bonide that combines Spinosad (mentioned above) and simple Potassium Salts of Fatty Acids. Very effective on a wide range of insects, especially when used regularly.