

# Alternatives to Pesticides



**The problem with pesticides:** Pesticides are poisons. They are specifically designed to harm and they can harm more than just the “pests” for which they are targeted.

Pesticides are toxic. Exposure to pesticides can hurt pollinators and other beneficial insects and plants. Pesticides also cause a number of health effects and a range of serious illnesses and diseases in humans and pets, from respiratory problems to cancer.



Wasps & Flies



Aphids & Mites



Snails & Slugs

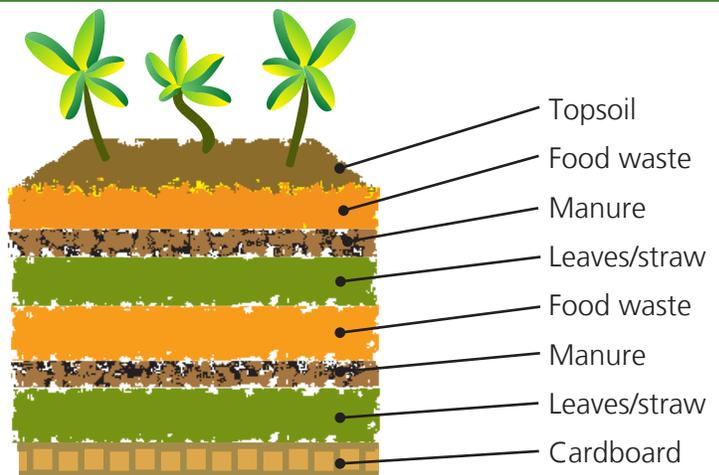
## Identify the pest:

The Oregon State University Extension office in Oregon City offers free services to help backyard gardeners and green industry professionals. With a sample of what is impacting your garden, or a damaged plant, they will help you identify the issue and recommend options for treatment.

## Layering and soil amendments:

Soil amendements improve soil health and encourage plant growth. Stronger plants resist pests and diseases. Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District has instructions on how to collect a soil sample to send to a lab for testing.

If weeds are covering a patch of land, create a raised bed with “lasagna gardening.” Add layers of alternating green and brown materials and keep it moist as it decomposes. You will have prepared a planting bed with no digging needed.



## Attract beneficial insects:

Encourage beneficial insects in your yard to keep damaging pests in check. Plant a variety of plant species to attract insects, or purchase beneficial insects like ladybugs, lacewings and nematodes at a garden center or online to target specific problems.



## Parting with Pesticides

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# Alternatives to Pesticides

Reclaim your yard from weeds and pests with these tried and tested natural methods. Be part of the movement to keep the Clackamas River clean for wildlife, recreation and drinking water.

## Take charge of your yard:

It is easier to spot and stop weeds if you are in your garden often. If you notice a few weeds, pull them by hand. It is much easier to remove one Himalayan blackberry than an entire patch.

Deter mice, gophers and moles by planting daffodils, marigolds and alliums. Act quickly if you see evidence of rodent activity before they become established. Rodents can be repelled with castor oil, peppermint oil, cayenne pepper and cloves.



Remove weeds by hand



Repel rodents with bitter tasting spices and strongly scented oils



Resist pests, don't need pesticides



Attract beneficial insects



Create habitat for pollinators

## Plant natives:

Plants native to our area have evolved to resist local pests and disease. They also do not require fertilizers or pesticides. Native plants create a complex ecosystem that can reduce damaging infestations of pests and weeds. Local wildlife benefit from the variety of seeds and fruit produced by native plants and the shelter they provide. These features attract birds and beneficial insects that help keep pests in check.

## Use boiling water:

Pour boiling water on weeds that are clustered together in smaller spaces, such as spacers in sidewalks and driveways. Be careful not to burn yourself or damage desirable plants.



## Create a barrier:

A stiff paper collar buried an inch deep in the soil around plants will protect them from burrowing insects and grubs. Fine mesh netting over taller plants will keep insects out. Copper sheets placed around the borders of your planting area discourage snails and slugs. Copper wire or tape on tree trunks will keep snails from climbing.