

## Products for the Organic Gardener

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### Pest prevention

A lot can be done through providing good growing conditions (please see our factsheet 'Growing Plants Successfully'). If plants have enough light for their needs and are growing in good soil with sufficient food and water, they will be better equipped to deal with pest attack, whereas sickly plants will tend to succumb more easily. Garden hygiene is also important to help minimize problems with pests and diseases. Ensure that seed trays, pots and tubs are clean before using them and clear up garden debris regularly. If any plants are really badly infested with pests or diseases, it is best to remove them, as the problem is only likely to spread to other plants. In vegetable plots pest problems may be reduced by practicing crop rotation. For further details of crop rotation see our vegetable growing factsheet on soil preparation and crop rotation or ask a member of staff in the garden centre.

### Organic based pest control products

If you prefer to use pest control products based on natural ingredients, there are several to choose from. These include Scotts' Nature's Answer Natural Bug Killer, Organic Pest Control and Liquid Derris Plus from Bayer Garden and Py Insect Killer range from Vitax.

### Other methods of pest control/prevention

Crop fleeces such as Agralan Environmesh protect vegetables against a range of common insect pests. Products such as grease bands or glue guns can be used as a barrier to crawling pests such as winter moth of fruit trees or vine weevil adults. Sticky yellow traps can be used in greenhouses and you could also employ the use of beneficial insects for **biological control** of some pest by natural predators. Agralan supply a range of these. Further details can be obtained by telephoning them on 01285 860015.

### Slug control

For alternative slug control, products such as slug baits and traps can be used or, if you prefer, control slugs in the area by means of conventional pellets applied thinly, as directed, initially. You can then keep areas clear of slugs by using barriers such as Vitax Slug Off or Westland Slug Blocker Eco Barrier Gel. Using Agralan Copper Slug Tape can protect plants grown in pots.

### Disease control

2-in-1 products such as Vitax Organic 2 in 1 Pest & Disease Control and Nature's Answer Natural Fungus & Bug Killer will help control some diseases as well as various insect pests. Other possible options for the organic gardener are copper based fungicides such as Murphy Traditional Copper Fungicide or Bordeaux Mixture or Green or Yellow Sulphur as the active ingredients are based on naturally occurring substances. To help prevent disease problems an organic garden/greenhouse **disinfectant** such as Agralan Citrox may be used

### Growing media and soil improvers

There are various organic composts available such as Westland Organic Multi-purpose Compost, the Gem Natural Earth Peat Free compost range and Miracle-Gro Eco Sense Peat Free Compost. The Levington Organic Choice Vegetable Planter is an organic alternative to a standard growing bag.

### Fertilizers

Products based on chicken manure or farmyard manure may be used as general-purpose fertilizers for the organic gardener. Fish, Blood & Bone is also based on natural ingredients and may be used as an alternative to conventional Growmore. Other products available include Gem Natural Earth Multi-Purpose Garden Feed Granules and plant tonics such as Natural Earth Seaweed Conditioner and Vitax Organic Liquid Seaweed. There are also organic **specialist fertilisers** available – eg Vitax Organic Rose Food and Natural Earth Organic Lawn Food.