

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

We would love to hear your tricks of the trade—what unusual or interesting methods have helped you in your garden, field or barn?

Since we haven't received any tips from readers lately, we thought we would start by printing the following items. Yes, these are news releases from businesses or groups with a vested interest in selling their products. But if you don't want us to print commercially-driven advice, please send us your tricks of the trade. If you don't have any, ask your friends and neighbours what makes their garden grow so well, their fields produce so well, or their animals look so healthy....

As always, consult your certification body before using any product.

Epsom salt for plants

Research indicates Epsom salt can help seeds germinate; make plants grow bushier; produce more flowers; increase chlorophyll production; improve phosphorus and nitrogen uptake; and deter pests, including slugs and voles. Visit www.epsomsaltcouncil.org for more information.

—Epsom Salt Council

TCOG: According to the Canadian organic standard, Epsom salt (magnesium sulphate) is allowed to address documented magnesium deficiencies in the soil but sulphates produced using sulphuric acid are prohibited.

A healthy pesticide?

Garlic has been used to cure many ailments for thousands of years but just recently it has been used specifically to repel insects and fungus.



Once garlic is crushed, it creates 33 organic sulphur compounds; mosquitoes find this unbearable. The odour of it chases them out of the area and they stay away—for as long as they can detect the odour. While the odour of sprayed garlic juice becomes undetectable to humans within minutes, the mosquitoes will still detect it. They will stay away from the sprayed area for up to a month and more.

Additionally, Mosquito Barrier [a commercial garlic spray], when mixed with soybean oil and water, coats standing water with a very thin film of natural oil, including some garlic oil which is present in the garlic juice. This oil assists in suffocating the mosquito larvae, which are developing in any standing water. Mosquito Barrier doesn't kill the bees, butterflies or birds.

—Upper Canada Organic Products

TCOG: If you make your own garlic spray, let us know how it works! Does it repel the mosquitoes, or is more effective at keeping garlic-phobic neighbours at a distance?

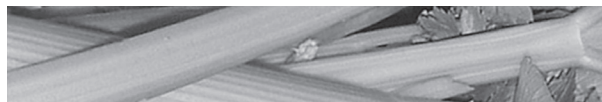
Send your tricks of the trade to janet@cog.ca.

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