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Beet, Chard: Aphids

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.

Biology

Aphids are small, pear-shaped, soft-bodied insects. They may range in color from yellowish to dark green. Aphids typically feed on the underside of leaves, sucking sap from the plant tissues. Aphid feeding can cause foliage to yellow, and leaves may wilt if infestations are severe. Aphid feeding produces honeydew, a sweet, sticky material which may attract ants or become covered with a dark growth of sooty mold.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Encourage natural enemies including ladybird beetles, lacewings, syrphid (hover) fly larvae, and parasitic wasps. Avoid use of broad-spectrum insecticides which kill beneficial insects.
- ~ Hand-wipe or prune to control small, localized infestations when practical.
- ~ Wash aphids from plants with a strong stream of water.
- ~ Control honeydew-feeding ants, which may protect aphid colonies from predators.
- ~ Provide proper nutrition. High levels of nitrogen encourage aphid reproduction. Switch to a slow-release or low-nitrogen fertilizer.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

Apply control measures when aphids first appear and repeat applications at 8- to 10-day intervals as needed. Soaps may require several applications. Thorough coverage of the foliage is important, including lower leaf surfaces.

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Images



~ Caption: Aphid colony
~ Photo by: A.L. Antonelli



~ Caption: Aphid cast skins
~ Photo by: R.S. Byther