

(revision date:3/10/2017)

## Tomato: Slugs

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

### **Biology**

Slugs are common garden pests in western Washington. They resemble snails, but lack shells. They may vary in size from as little as 1/4" up to several inches in length, depending on age and species. Foliage of older plants is raggedly chewed, while younger plants may be totally consumed. Slugs leave behind a characteristic slime trail, which appears silvery when it dries. Slugs typically feed at night and do more damage during cool, moist weather.

### **Management Options**

#### **Non-Chemical Management**

- ~ Encourage predators such as birds, garter snakes, frogs, ducks, and predacious ground beetles. Avoid use of broad-spectrum insecticides which kill beneficial insects.
- ~ Hand-pick and kill slugs when noticed.
- ~ Clean up weeds and debris which may provide shelter. Cut tall weeds and grasses around the garden and clean up rocks, boards, and other shelters.
- ~ Trap slugs with cans of stale beer sunk into the ground.
- ~ Use chemical baits with caution, as pets can be poisoned. Iron phosphate-based baits are safer for pets!

*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 around borders and between rows. Do not apply to plants.

**Listed below are examples of pesticides that are legal in Washington. Always read and follow all label directions.**

- ~ Escar-Go! Slug & Snail Bait
    - active ingredient: iron phosphate
    - EPA reg no: 67702-3-56872
  - ~ Lilly Miller Slug & Snail Bait
    - active ingredient: metaldehyde
    - EPA reg no: 8119-11-33116
  - ~ Monterey Sluggo [Organic]
    - active ingredient: iron phosphate
    - EPA reg no: 67702-3-54705
- ~ This list may not include all products registered for this use.

## Tomato: Slugs

### Images



~ Caption: Slug damage and slime  
~ Photo by: R.S. Byther



~ Caption: Slug  
~ Photo by: C.R. Foss



~ Caption: Brown slug  
~ Photo by: C.R. Foss