

## **IPM (Integrated Pest Management)** **For HOME GARDENERS**

The IPM (Integrated Pest Management) approach was created to reduce bad pest populations **and** to increase beneficial insect populations, which should then reduce plant loss and increase plant production. To emphasize, this approach is for the control of, but not the eradication of, pests. Studies have shown that, by selecting a variety of plants that are resistant to common diseases along with correct planting locations (sun light or shade) and the use of crop rotation, the homeowner will have healthier plant growth and a much more pest-free garden.

For IPM to work, correct identification of the garden pests is first needed, as well as determining how large the insect problem is within your garden. Many times beneficial insects are mistaken as the cause(s) for plant problems, so an accurate identification of those insects, seen or captured, is very important. Also, remember that many beneficial insects help to reduce crop-destroying pests. Once you have identified the insect(s), you will be able to determine if you have a beneficial insect(s) or not. Then, you can select what type of insecticide should or should not be used. This is the aim of IPM - to keep beneficial insects in the gardens, thus increasing the garden plants health and plant reproduction. It is important that, during the growing season, you monitor the plants often and up-close, helping to locate problems early on before they become major issues. Monitor every week once a week for vegetables; monitor every two weeks on flowering plants; monitor monthly on shrubs and trees.

The use of insect traps is another way to identify insects. There are many varieties of traps available - sticky traps, pheromone traps and pit fall traps. To help identify those insects you have seen or captured, use pictured guide books or browse the internet.

For further identification help, you can bring the insects or pictures of such to the Tulsa OSU Extension office. Trained Master Gardeners

are there every day Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and are pleased to help you.

To recap IPM principles:

- Proper Plant Selections for the area, along with the sun & shade requirements
- Identifying Good & Bad insects
- Proper use of Insecticides
- Crop Rotation whenever possible.

**"IPM provides the least risk while increasing benefits at a smaller cost."**