

“Solutions for a happier lawn and garden”



TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR VEGGIES...THEY TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU!

Planting and caring for a veggie garden can be quite a game. It can be challenging, relaxing, frustrating, rewarding, educational, but most importantly...delicious! Who or what is to blame for the problems we may encounter with our veggie gardens? Let's blame someone or something, shall we? Let's blame some of the key players in the veggie garden game. The key players that we are going to use as scape goats are; temperature, soil, light, and water. Sometimes it is an insect, sometimes a disease, occasionally Mother Nature plays a part, and often the gardener is the guilty one. Let's face it folks, none of us are perfect gardeners. We try. We try so hard but sometimes our schedules get in the way or we are just not sure what to do. Should this stop us? Never! Gardening is one of the healthiest and rewarding hobbies we can ever have.

Let's place some of the blame for a poor performing veggie garden on temperature. Temperature is a key player in the veggie garden game. If it is erratic, too cold, or too hot, it can foul up the game. If the soil and air are too cold...

- *Vegetable seedlings may grow very slowly and turn yellow.
- *Tomatoes may stay "greenback" and fail to ripen at the stem end.
- *Flowers may prematurely bolt and bloom.
- *Leaves may brown and melt away at the tips due to frost.
- If temperatures are too hot...
- *Leaves may turn brown along the edges and tips from leaf scorch.
- *Crops may be stunted.
- *Produce can be strongly flavored.
- *Beets can develop a bulls-eye pattern.
- *Onion bulbs may turn gray on the outer layers.
- *Flowers may prematurely bloom.

Gardeners don't have any control over temperature but we can pay attention and be sure not to plant veggies too early in the season.

Soil is a very important player in the game. Without good soil, you will not have good vegetables. Soil deficiencies can throw the veggie garden game completely off. Here are some examples of what you may come across...

- *Lower leaves turning yellow and not falling off the plant may be a sign of low nitrogen.
- *New leaves turning yellow while the veins stay green is often an iron deficiency.
- *A potassium deficiency shows up as yellow leaf edges with brown spots.
- *Purplish leaves and veins indicate a phosphorus deficiency.
- *Black circular lesions on the blossom end of veggies is usually due to a lack of calcium.
- *Forked and twisted carrots and potatoes mean the soil is too rocky or compact.

Veggie gardeners, you have a lot of control over your soil. Start out right and you will be rewarded with beautiful produce. Simple steps such as; turning over your soil, alleviating compaction with Encap's Gypsum, fertilizing with Espoma's Garden-Tone, adjusting your pH with Limestone, and adding rich compost can make all the difference in the world.





Do not downplay how crucial of a player light is to the veggie garden game. Without proper sunlight, issues can occur.

Issues such as...

*Vegetables get sunburned just like people. If you see larger brown, burnt patches on your leaves and/or fruit, the culprit may be too much sun.

*Leaf scorch will cause leaves to turn brown at the tips and edges.

*If leaves are pale green and plants are spindly, they are not getting enough sun and they are desperately reaching for it.

We obviously cannot move the sun but we can help our veggies get the right amount of light. As a rule of thumb, most vegetables that get a fruit can bake in the sun. Veggies such as; tomatoes, peppers, and squash love it. Consider putting your leafier vegetables in the less sunny part of the garden.

Salad greens, broccoli, peas, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, beets, radish, chard, collards, spinach, and mustard will all tolerate a little less sunlight.

I don't know if I can label water as the star player of the veggie game but it sure is one of the most important.

Here are some examples of water-related problems:

*Wilted veggies & bone dry soil means too little water.

*Wilted plants & soaking wet soil means too much water.

*Wilted vegetables in a container that recover quickly when watered & wilt quickly again are root bound.

*Wilted veggies in the ground that have soaking wet soil are poorly drained..

*If leaves turn yellow & drop at the base of the stems first, the plant is getting too much water.

*If leaves turn brown at the tips & edges, they are getting too much sun and too little water.

*Stunted and strongly flavored vegetables may not be getting enough water.

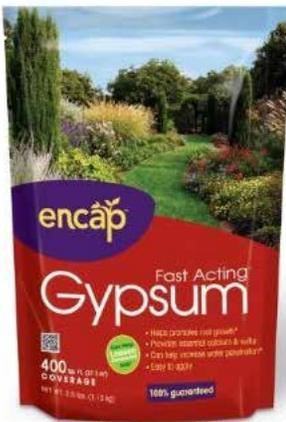
*If tomatoes look scabby they probably received too much water.

Gardening friends, you have so much power when it comes to watering. If Mother Nature is not giving your veggies enough water, it is your job to take over. Plants need consistent, even watering to keep them healthy. Your vegetables would be happier if they were watered at the base as opposed to overhead and please do not let them dry out for too long.

Take good care of your veggies and they will take good care of you.

Come see us at Van Wilgen's. We would love to help!

Thanks a bunch...Stacey



Van Wilgen's

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