

Nematode Management

Home Gardens

Nematode Management in Home Vegetable Gardens

Root-knot and reniform nematodes cause problems on many vegetables grown in the home garden. Cultural practices and resistant varieties can reduce the amount of damage in the garden.

Cultural Practices

1. Plant early before nematodes become active in soil.
2. Rotate crops in the garden.
3. Rotate the garden site each year.
4. Add organic matter to the soil in the form of green manures or mulches to stimulate natural enemies of nematodes and improve growing conditions within the soil for plants.
5. Use fallow plowing during parts of the summer to reduce nematode levels.
6. Keep the garden clean of weeds and grasses, which serve as natural hosts for nematodes.
7. Keep soil fertility levels high and have the soil pH in the correct range for your soil type.
8. Provide extra water during prolonged dry spells.
9. Remove crops immediately after they are through producing, especially the roots.
10. Most of the marigolds (except Signet types) are effective trap crops against root-knot nematodes. Plant the marigolds solid for at least two to three months and then plant vegetables.

Resistant Varieties or Crops

- Root-knot nematode resistant varieties include:
 - **Tomatoes**
 - *Vine types*: Big Beef, Champion, Terrific, Better Boy, Mountain Fresh Plus.
 - *Bush types*: Celebrity, Crista, Fresh Plus; *Others*: Muriel Roma, Small Fry.
 - **Southern Peas** - Mississippi Silver and Mississippi Purple.
- Reniform nematode-resistant crops include broccoli, cauliflower, corn, okra, onion, peanut, radish and turnip

The nematode sections were revised October 2019 by Dr. C. Overstreet.