



Scandia, MN
20021 St Croix Trail North
651.433.2431

Stillwater MN
2100 Tower Drive
651.439.2140

St Croix Falls WI
1257 State Road 35

www.abrahamsonnurseries.com

Curing leaf problems that are caused by insects

You can recognize insect damage easier than other kinds of leaf problems. Insects usually eat part of the leaf, or suck out the sap. They hide under the leaf, in the soil, or in the tips of the plants. Some of them are tiny, so it might help to have a magnifying glass when you look for them.

The cures:

Pick off the bugs. Big ones like caterpillars can be picked off. Little ones like mites and aphids can sometimes be washed off with water from a hose. If you've spotted just a few, this may be all you have to do.

Spray with an organic product.

Oils and soaps will smother the insects and their eggs, and can work well. Spray early in the morning, when the leaf is not in full sun. And spray thoroughly! The entire plant, and under the leaves as well. The only bugs you'll control are the ones that get coated.

Bacillus thuringiensis is a bacteria that you spray so the bug dies from the bacterial infection. It works well for worms and caterpillars. You'll need to spray it several times, a few days apart, to get the best control.

Captain Jack products contain Spinosad, a bacterial by-product. It works well on many kinds of worms as well as some small insects.

Pyrethrins are from mum plants, and are sometimes called Pyrethrum. It is especially useful to control small insects. Pyrethrins break down in sunlight, so spray close to sunset to get the best results.

Spray with a traditional chemical

Systemic products with Imidicloprid. This can be sprayed on plants or watered into the soil (depending on the label). The chemical goes into the plant, and when an insect takes a bite they also get the chemical. Very effective!

'Eight' or 'Beetle Killer': The active ingredient is Permethrin, a synthetic chemical related to Pyrethrins. They last a lot longer and are very effective against a wide range of bugs, including aphids and Japanese Beetles.

Malathion is another old chemical (1950) that is still effective. It kills mostly small insects and can be used on flowers, fruits and vegetables.