

Questions during our training sessions and replies from master gardener volunteers.

Addressed to Char Reynolds during visit to her garden during the General Gardening Practices class.

Char Reynolds's response, 8-3-15

What kind of fertilizer to you use on plants during their growth period?

Thought I would let you know how we water/feed our tomatoes. 3 week cycle. Once a week for 2 weeks with Miracle Grow, the 3rd week we use the Sea Magic, then back to the MG. We water every other day when it's this dry.

Rhubarb Question: When do you stop harvesting rhubarb?

Did a little checking on the rhubarb. No health issues, guess that's a hold over from what my family told me when I was a kid. However, best harvesting in spring and early summer. Hot, dry weather degrades the petiole. Pull the flower stalk as soon as seen, so the energy goes into the leave, not the seeds. that way you will, hopefully, have a good harvest in the coming year. Harvesting all summer, means you are taking energy from the roots that is necessary for the plant to overwinter, then put up a healthy crop for you the coming spring. So, stopping harvesting about the 4th of July, means you basically are making sure you have a healthy plant for the coming year.

Question about organic apple spray:

Gary Olson responded, 8-2-15

I've got a four-pronged attack to try to grow organic apples:

- 1). I put up codling moth traps with pheromone lures to attract the male codling moths. I have 20 of them spaced around in trees.
- 2). I mix up a concoction and put it in gallon jugs with a hole cut in the side. I mix 1 cup vinegar, 1/3 cup dark molasses, 1/8 teaspoon ammonia, 4 and 2/3 cup water. I quadruple this recipe since I have 22 jugs hanging in the orchard. It's supposed to attract them like fermented juice. The theory is the codling moths check in but don't check out.
- 3). I also put a hooded light in the middle of the orchard. I have a timer on it so it's supposed to turn on at 8:00 P.M. and turn off at 6:00 A.M. The light attracts the codling

moths to the light. I have a tray of water underneath and put some diesel fuel or kerosene in it every day. The theory is the moths are attracted to the light, fall in the water, and drown. The codling moth is the proverbial worm in the apple. Did you know there's nothing worse than finding half a worm in an apple? A little apple humor there.

4). My son has been working on this the last few days. I cut out a bunch of 8 x 10 inch plywood chunks. Painted yellow on each side, and then a red circle about the size of an apple on each side, then a real sticky product called Tanglefoot applied to the red circle on each side.

I got the Tanglefoot from the Gardens Alive catalog. The theory is the apple maggot is attracted to the red color, and get stuck in the sticky stuff. I've observed this year the insect pressure isn't too bad.

If you have any more questions, I'd be happy to try to answer them. Thanks, Gary.