

Weed and pest control

Preventing instead of spraying

The aim of an organic vegetable garden is to grow healthy fruit and vegetables without the use of chemical pesticides. In an organic garden, the focus is on strengthening plants' natural defences and regulating pests and diseases without resorting to poisons. Weeds are controlled mechanically or by mulching.

Prevention principles

Healthy soil and balanced fertilisation

These are the basics of healthy plant growth: Humus-rich, well-aerated soil ensures robust plant growth. It helps plants resist pests and diseases (see also the **Fertilising with compost** information sheet).

Alternating and mixed crops

This prevents the land from being depleted by monoculture and helps keep the soil healthy. Alternating crops significantly reduces pest and disease problems (see also the **Alternating and mixed crops** information sheet).

Related crops

Many garden plants can be used to combat pests through their root secretions or their scent. Mixed crops are a good way to take advantage of this (see also the **Alternating and mixed crops** information sheet).



If you avoid spraying synthetic products in your garden, you can be sure of being able to harvest healthy, untreated fruit.

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Friends and enemies in the garden

Hardy species

It is best to choose hardy species. Many older varieties have a proven track record and are more resistant to disease and pests. If you're looking for more recent varieties, choose the hardiest ones.

Many flowers attract beneficial animals, such as this bumblebee.



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Soil care and weeds

As long as you tackle weeds regularly, by digging them up, pulling them out or partially burying them, they will not pose any real problems in the garden. Weeds can become a serious problem if not properly taken care of.

Digging the soil not only helps control weeds but also helps to save water. Shallow digging reduces water evaporation from the soil. The water retained by the soil is entirely available to the vegetables being grown. To protect biodiversity and your health, avoid using pesticides to get rid of weeds.

Encouraging the presence of beneficial animals in your garden

Pests thrive in places where their natural enemies are absent. Birds, hedgehogs and shrews, ladybugs, beetles, hoverflies and glowworms are examples of garden animals that help reduce pests.

By providing them with shelter, food and places to hibernate, we not only enhance the biological variety within the garden but also make good use of garden assistants (see also the **Pest control with beneficial animals** information sheet).



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