



PESTS AND DISEASES

DISEASES

Mildew in Pumpkins, Cucumbers, Melons and other vine crops is the disease that will most worry the home gardener. There are two kinds, but Powdery Mildew is more common and it may cause damage to Rock Melons, Cucumbers, Pumpkins, Squashes and Marrows.

It is first recognised by white powdery spots appearing underneath the older leaves and also the upper surface of the leaves where they are shaded from the sun. The spots quickly merge and soon cover the whole leaf.

Downy Mildew will be found mainly on Cucumbers and Rock Melons, the leaves of which are infected by sparse white downy growth with the addition of yellowish spots which, however, are not usually round but pointed. The chief control measure is to spray with weak Bordeaux Mixture, 3-4-40. This will also control Anthracnose, another disease affecting these plants.

Sulphur dusts also control Powdery Mildew but may injure the leaves of Rock Melons and Cucumbers. However, they can be safely used on Pumpkins, Squashes and Marrows, and should be applied at weekly intervals.

As a prevention all sprays, whether Bordeaux or Sulphur, should be applied once a week, commencing when the plants are quite young.

PESTS

Pumpkin Beetle: Attacks by this pest result in the plant being rapidly eaten and finally reduced to a skeleton. Spray with half strength DDT Agricultural Emulsion.

Green Vegetable Bug: This is a sap-sucking insect which usually attacks the young shoots which soon wilt. Spray with DDT as for Pumpkin Beetle.

Red Spider: Leaves become mottled with fine webbing and greyish-red mites are seen on the lower surfaces of the foliage. Spray with lime sulphur.

Aphids: Not usually troublesome to vine crops, but attacks are known.

EGG PLANT

Although widely grown in America this plant is not seen to the same extent in this country. The large semi-globe fruits are cut into slices, covered with salt,

and then fried in batter. They are also very tasty boiled or baked and served with bread-crumbs.

Requirements: As this plant has a fairly long growing season, it requires approximately 7 months of frost-free conditions between Spring and Autumn. The soil preparation is similar to that required for tomatoes: these plants thrive in a sunny, well-drained position.

When to Sow: Seedlings are raised as early in the Spring as possible but, where frosts are still prevalent, it is necessary to give them protection, such as a cool frame. Provided the season is long enough, further sowings can be made during Spring.

How to Sow: As these plants do not transplant easily it is sometimes the practice to use tins or strawberry punnets in which to sow the seeds. Two seeds are sown in each and if both germinate, one plant is removed. Where seeds are sown direct into the open ground, they are set in pairs and, again, if both germinate, one plant is pulled out. These pairs are spaced 2 feet apart in rows with the same distance between.

Cultivation: This is the same as for Tomato. If plants tend to carry more than 8 to 10 fruits, any over this number should be taken off. Fruits are ready for use when they have attained their rich, deep purple shade which should occur within about 6 months of germination.



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