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Wed, 11/12/2008 - 10:37 -- Kitchy

Question:

What steps should I take to begin growing my vegetables organically?

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Answer::

First, stop using chemical pesticides and fungicides. When you garden organically, you won't ever use those products, and even approved "organic" pesticides will be your last resort. There are lots of effective pest-control methods that don't involve spraying, but you can also try homemade sprays using such ingredients as baking soda and dishwashing liquid. These may solve all, or nearly all, your pest problems. More and more organic products are available at garden centers these days, so this switchover is a lot easier than it once was. Keep in mind, though, that there also are homemade remedies that will eliminate problems, and there are effective preventive steps to take long before you bring out a sprayer. The following tips and techniques are

a key part of avoiding pest and disease problems in an organic garden: -Build healthy soil by applying compost, mulch, and natural fertilizers. -Ask experts as well as friends and neighbors who garden which pests and diseases pose the biggest problems in your area. Find out how they control these problems organically. -Walk through your garden daily - or every other day at minimum - to check for pests as well as signs of diseases or other problems. Catching problems early allows you to step in and correct a problem before it becomes severe. -Keep plants well watered and fertilize regularly if you suspect your soil is not yet up to par. Plants that are healthy and growing vigorously are far less subject to problems than ones that are struggling. Reprinted from The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book Copyright 2008 by Barbara W. Ellis, with permission from Storey Publishing. Creative Commons photo credit: Marj Joly

Question Details (optional):

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