

NEWSLETTER

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PRESTON GARDEN CLUB COMMITTEE 2019/2020

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CANCELLATION OF EVENTS

Due to the COVID - 19 pandemic and the risks associated with it all Preston Garden Club activities have been cancelled until further notice.

This includes March 25th general meeting, 5th April bus trip (ticket money will be refunded in full), April 18th Garden Gala, April 22nd general meeting.

You will continue to receive your monthly newsletter, which will keep you up to date with any changes to this situation.

Keep safe and well.

Bill Saunders - President.

cucumber family. A fast-growing fungus, powdery mildew is also among the worst enemies of rosemary, and is a well-known disease of Monarda, Grape and Zinnia. Each of these unrelated plants hosts a different strain of powdery mildew, but it has been found that they all can be controlled with regular sprays of milk and water.



MILK & POWDERY MILDEW

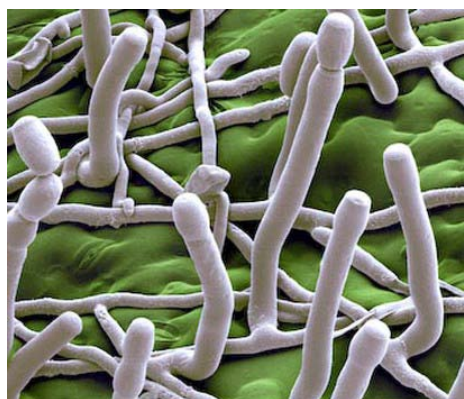
You don't have to garden long to become acquainted with the disease called powdery mildew, which creates whitish patches on the leaves of pumpkin, winter squash, and other members of the

What is Powdery Mildew?

To understand how milk sprays prevent powdery mildew and thus use them most effectively, you must first understand your enemy. Powdery mildew fungi are present in many environments, so that even in the cleanest gardens, outbreaks can begin from spores spread by windblown rain, or on the feet of insects and birds. But when the right strain of powdery mildew finds a suitable host plant, it quickly sinks root-like structures into the cells on the leaf's surface. There it stays, taking nutrition from the leaf while developing a matrix of thread-like structures over the surface. This is when we gardeners



notice unusual patches of white or light gray with a powdery or furry texture, usually on the top sides of leaves.



For the infected plants, powdery mildew cripples its ability to conduct photosynthesis by blocking out light, and stops up the leaf's gas exchange system, too. Powdery mildew can quickly spread to nearby leaves, so it's always a good idea to clip out leaves that show early spotting. Also make use of resistant varieties of cucumbers, squash and melon, which can be of tremendous help in preventing powdery mildew. Resistant varieties have special characteristics that make it extremely difficult for powdery mildew fungi to enter leaves, which they do with cell-melting enzymes.

Using Milk for Plant Mildews.

More than 50 years ago, researchers in Canada discovered that milk sprays could help prevent powdery mildew on tomato and barley. Then the age of fungicides began, with no further published research on the milk cure until 1999. Since then, numerous small studies from around the world have validated the use of milk sprays on powdery mildew on a wide range of plants. Most recently, a spray made of 40% milk and 60% water was as effective as chemical fungicides in managing powdery mildew of pumpkins and cucumbers grown in mildew-prone Connecticut. In Australia, milk sprays have proven to be as effective as sulphur and synthetic

chemicals in preventing powdery mildew on grapes. In New Zealand, milk did a top-rate job of suppressing powdery mildew in apples.

Scientists are not exactly sure how milk sprays work, but most think proteins in the milk interact with sun to create a brief antiseptic effect. Any fungi present are "burned" into oblivion, but there is no residual effect after that. In order to be effective, milk sprays must be used preventively, must be applied in bright light, and should be repeated every 10 days or so.

Use a hand-held pump-spray bottle to wet both sides of the leaf until it's dripping, and usually spray in mid to late afternoon on a sunny day. In the days that follow.



There is no consensus on which dilution of milk to water is best, with the most concentrated recommended mixture 40% milk and 60% water, and the most dilute 10% milk and 90% water. It does not matter if the milk you use is skim or whole because it is the protein rather than the milk fat that is working on your behalf.

With experience, you will learn which types of powdery mildew are likely to develop in your garden, and this knowledge will take you far in managing this disease. Like other fungicides, milk sprays work best when used preventatively, before the disease can gain a foothold. If you often see powdery mildew on your squash, grapes or zinnias, start milk

sprays before the plants show signs of infection. You have nothing to lose beyond a cup of milk.

BEST TOMATOES EVER

When dealing with gardening and planting all of those fruits and veggies, the greatest satisfaction of every gardener is to see the final outcome or the product at the end of the process. Juicy fruits, healthy plants and delicious crops will be the biggest gift for every single person dealing with gardening.

Luckily for you, there are some tricks that every gardener should know, in order to improve the quality and stimulate the growth of the plants. Here are some tricks before transplanting your tomatoes:



EPSOM SALT

Why Epsom Salt? – Epsom salt is rich in magnesium, the most-needed nutrient that makes wonders with tomatoes. So, the next time you wonder what went wrong with your tomatoes, maybe they were lacking magnesium.

What to do? – Use one or two tablespoons of Epsom salt in the hole, before transplanting the seedling in the planting hole. However, it's best if you cover the salt with a layer of soil in order to prevent the roots of the plants touching the salt directly. You'll see that the results are amazing and you'll get the most juicy and delicious tomatoes.



ASPIRIN

Why Aspirin? – Due to the salicylic acid in aspirin, your tomatoes will flourish once they get in touch with aspirin. It will be a great solution for increasing the yield as well as fighting off diseases such as blight.

What to do? – Add two or three aspirin tablets in the hole and you can also make your own homemade solution and spray your tomatoes once in a while. You will help your tomatoes to boost their immunity.

BAKING SODA

Why Baking Soda? – If you like your tomatoes sweeter in taste, then baking soda is just right for you. This is especially true for the ones who grow tomatoes in containers.

What to do? – Just sprinkle little baking soda around the base of the tomato plants. Once the soda absorbs in the soil, it will lower the acidity levels and your tomatoes will have a sweeter taste.



USED COFFEE GROUNDS

Why Used Coffee Grounds? – The used coffee grounds can be used even as a mulch. Used coffee grounds improve the soil composition and it's also a great source of fertilizer. Your tomatoes will produce juicy and healthy fruits thanks to the used coffee grounds.

What to do? – Place used coffee grounds in the soil before transplanting the tomatoes, then cover it with soil.

FISH HEADS

Why Fish Heads? – Fish heads are already widely known for boosting your plants, especially your tomatoes. This is due to the fact that fish heads are loaded with potent nutrients such as the most essential trace minerals and their decay will trigger the release of potassium, calcium, nitrogen and phosphorus.

What to do? – Well, you need to be really careful with digging a hole which is at least a foot deep, because you may risk from critters digging them up.

There are two ways in which you can use fish heads in your gardening. The first one is putting them directly in the deep hole and the second one is using ground fish scrapes and mixing them with two cups of water and a cup of milk as a solution which you can use. Either way you choose, it will be a supercharge boost for your tomatoes.



EGGSHELLS

Why Eggshells? – Eggshells are loaded with calcium and if you have done your reading about the power of calcium, then you'll know that calcium is the much-needed nutrient which stimulates growth.

What to do? – Before planting your tomatoes, put some eggshell in the whole and by doing so, you will prevent rotten tomatoes and stimulate the blossom of the plants.

BONE MEAL

Why Bone Meal? – Bone meal is an excellent source of protein and phosphorus, the important nutrients which will boost your tomatoes and stimulate a healthy tomato growth.

What to do? – Add a handful or a cup of bone meal in the hole before planting your tomatoes. Bone meal will supply your tomatoes with the much needed nutrient- phosphorus and you'll get the most healthy and juicy tomato fruits.

VANILLA SLICE

There are few more amazing Australian dishes than a great vanilla slice. Crisp pastry, silky custard and attractive icing.

Prep: 20 Minutes - Cook: 30 Minutes - Easy - Serves 12



Ingredients:

Cooking oil spray, to grease.
2 sheets store-bought frozen ready-rolled puff pastry, partially thawed.
100g white chocolate, melted.
2 cups milk.

1 cup thickened cream.
 75g unsalted butter.
 2 tsp vanilla extract with seeds.
 150g caster sugar.
 8 egg yolks.
 65g cornflour.
 1/2 cup water.
 1 cup (300g) white fondant icing.
 75g good-quality dark chocolate, melted.

Method:

Preheat oven to 180°C. Grease a 20cm square cake tin with cooking oil spray. Line base and sides with baking paper. Put each sheet of puff pastry between 2 pieces of non-stick baking paper, then sandwich between 2 flat oven trays. Bake for 25 minutes or until pastry is deep golden. Cool completely on a wire rack, then brush 1 side of each with melted white chocolate. Cut sheets to fit into prepared tin and put 1 sheet in base, chocolate-side up.

Put milk, cream, butter and vanilla in a medium saucepan and bring to a simmer over a medium heat. Meanwhile, put sugar, yolks and cornflour in a bowl and whisk until light and creamy. Stir in water. Pour in hot milk mixture, stirring well, then return mixture to saucepan over a medium heat and bring to the boil, whisking constantly until a thick custard forms.

Pour hot custard mixture over pastry and spread to flatten, then put second pastry square on top, chocolate side down. Allow to cool, then cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours or overnight, or until firm.

Put fondant icing in a large heatproof bowl over a saucepan of barely-simmering water for 5 minutes or until warmed and spreadable. Working quickly, spread over top of slice using a warm palette knife. Put dark chocolate in a small zip-lock bag and snip corner tip. While fondant

is still warm, drizzle chocolate in evenly spaced lines, then run a toothpick through lines in parallel direction to create a feather effect. Set aside for 10 minutes or until firm.

Slice into 12 rectangles. Serve.

COMING EVENTS

Some events may be cancelled at a later date, best check directly before attending.

25 - 29 March Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show. **CANCELLED**

28 March - 19 April. Tesselaar Kabloom Festival Of Flowers. **CANCELLED**

18 - 19 April. Melbourne Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Growing Friends 2020 Autumn Plant Sale. Times -Saturday 10:00 am to 4:00 pm; and Sunday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. entry is free. The Catalogue of the plants available will be on the Friends website, rbgfriendsmelb.org, a week prior to the Sale. Location Royal Botanical Gardens Melbourne . Enter the Gardens through Gate E on Birdwood Ave. Contact for further information phone, 9650 6398 or email, friends@frbgmelb.org.au

25 - 26 April. Bendigo Goldfields Chrysanthemum & Floral Art Show 2020. Saturday 25th 9am to 4pm and Sunday 9am to 3pm. Admission: \$3. Chrysanthemum Championship & Floral Art Championship, Trading Table & Light refreshments. Location Exhibition Centre Bendigo Showgrounds, Holmes Road, Bendigo. Contact Telephone: 03 5439 7211. Or email: Jsmorvell@gmail.com

MEMBERS NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

March: Hilary May, Carolyn Scott & Robert Strugnell.

We wish you all a wonderful celebration.

STAMPS

Still looking to collect postage stamps, Australian and Foreign is ok. Save them and bring along when we start normal meetings again. Thanks in advance. Robert

FIND THE WORD

Well, how did you go with finding the word in the last newsletter? The word is –

CROWN

The word this month has 6 letters. What could it be?

Look at the four pictures for the clue. Answer next newsletter.

