

HATCH PATCH FACT SHEET

SNAIL AND SLUG CONTROL

Slug and snail (S&S) control should be directed at preventing the development of large populations. This means killing as many as possible in the late summer and fall to prevent egg laying and a large progeny in the spring. Part of your garden calendar should remind you to work on slugs and snails in September and October.

Sanitation practices such as removing accumulated debris, eliminating breeding sites like grass clumps will help reduce S&S population.

Ground covers, lawns and other perennial plantings harbor them and are often a source of the edible garden invasion.

An early morning or late evening patrol where plant tissue is disappearing will probably reveal S&S at work or travelling to or from their daytime hiding places. A sharp stick, shoe heel, dropping them into a can of soapy water or other imaginative methods may be used to dispatch the enemy. A spray bottle filled with half and half household ammonia and water makes a lethal solution that is immediate in its action. Salt is not recommended because the concentration of this toxic chemical may damage plants. Keep a tally on the garage wall to document your hunting skills!

These slimy critters are not affected by most insecticides. Baits that contain metaldehyde are the most common. Sevin (carbaryl) combined with it makes it more effective. Be sure to follow the label instructions. Pets are reported to have been adversely affected by metaldehyde.

Northwest gardeners, who really have to fight S&S have found Deadline MpS to be one of the best products in the arsenal. It is not attractive to pets or wildlife, and is quite rain resistant.

Baits that contain iron phosphate (Sluggo) are very effective, but also safe to use around pets.

Baits need not be scattered over the entire area as S&S will be attracted to them from several feet away. Therefore, bait stations in strategic spots are efficient and effective.

Besides limiting their availability to non-target animals, baits so placed will last longer than if exposed to the elements such as rain, sun, etc.

Small piles of bait covered with a slightly propped up board is the simplest bait station. The area remains somewhat moist so S&S tend to congregate there. -

Milk cartons with "doorways" cut for entry may be placed on their sides. Bait is accessible but protected from rain or irrigation and does not touch the soil.

Cans or plastic food containers which have tight fitting lids may be converted to a more elaborate bait station. They are even more difficult for non-target species to obtain access to the bait.

Use a hacksaw to cut a 1/2" - 1" slot on 2 sides of the can. The lidded plastic container can be prepared with a knife. The device may be painted green to blend with the garden surroundings. Bury them so the slots are level with the soil.

Commercial baits may be used as the attractant and will be even more attractive if you moisten them slightly with apple or orange juice. Check the traps frequently to remove dead S&S and replenish the bait as needed.

The reservoir may be filled with beer or yeast water. The S&S are attracted, enter the liquid and drown. It is not the alcohol that does them in. Slugs are drawn to yeasty smelling liquids. An inexpensive alternative to beer is to combine a quart of warm water, a packet of dry yeast and a little sugar, molasses, or honey. It takes about 15 minutes at room temperature to activate the yeast. Keep it in the refrigerator, and use it later to rebait the traps. Removal of the carcasses is necessary to maintain the appealing character of the device.

The covered, deeper containers are much more effective than shallow pans of liquid. They are less likely for the beer or yeast water to become diluted from rains or irrigation. The greater depth gives less chance for S&S to escape.

The bait stations may be used anywhere S&S are active because the can or carton keeps the baits from contacting the soil or plants, Logical locations are around the garden perimeter to intercept those migrating from lawns, groundcover or other favorable habitats. If the

S&S have established a foothold in the garden, place the stations where the activity is.

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