

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

Common pests and diseases: Grapes

When growing fruits and vegetables, it is always exciting to care for the plant throughout its growing phase and then harvest it for delicious recipes later on, but one thing to watch out for is pests and diseases. Different plants are susceptible to different types of pests and diseases, and it is important to make yourself aware so you can keep a watchful eye and also take any preventative methods to keep your plants safe throughout their lifespan.

Grapes can fall victim to several different pests and diseases.

Pests:

Some of the most common pests affecting grapes can include Japanese beetles, grape mealybugs and the black vine weevil.

Japanese beetles cause problems to many plants. On grape plants, they affect the roots, leaves and fruit. The beetle's larvae feed on the roots, and the adults feed on the leaves and fruits. Both larvae and adults cause damage. A symptom is skeletonized leaves. To prevent this problem, use insecticides.

The grape mealybug will cause a sooty mold to grow on the grape fruits. This pest is generally pretty sporadic, and it will secrete a sugary substance on the fruit that then encourages the growth of mold. To manage this, control your ant populations and encourage mealybug population natural enemies. You also can apply appropriate insecticides when necessary.

The black vine weevil will cause feeding damage on the stems, leaves, flowers and



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buds of the grape plants. A black vine weevil infestation will cause a loss of vigor in plant growth. To manage this problem, grow a cover crop such as red fescue to lessen the chances of the black vine weevil infesting your grapes.

Diseases:

Some of the common diseases affecting the grape plant include anthracnose, Armillaria root rot, Botrytis bunch and more.

Anthracnose will cause dark red lesions on the fruit and also sunken gray lesions on the fruit. Lesions on the leaves can cause the leaves to curl. This disease can kill certain parts of the grape plant. Plant less susceptible varieties and apply appropriate fungicides when necessary.

Armillaria root rot causes weak and short shoots, and it also causes a white fungus under the bark at the soil line. This will lead to unproductive vines and causes the plant to rapidly wilt. There are no known grape plants resistant to this disease. To manage



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this disease, you may need to fumigate in soils suspected of carrying the disease.

Botrytis bunch rot will cause the stem to have brown lesions early in the season and the grapes will become covered in a gray or tan powder. The stems and grapes can shrivel. To manage this disease, plant less susceptible varieties and do not overfertilize. You also can try to improve the air circulation.



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