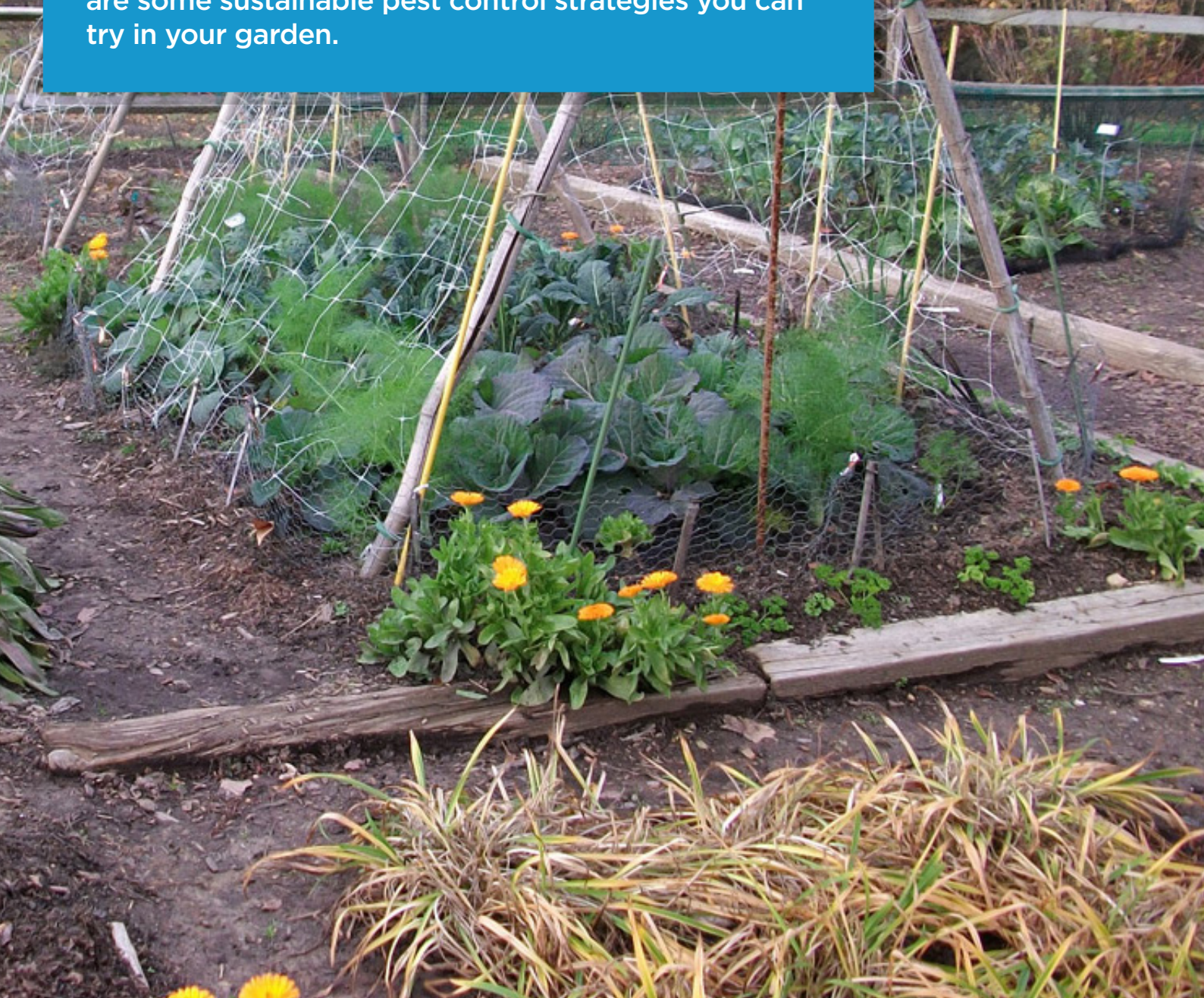


# actsmart<sup>®</sup>

## controlling pests without pesticides

More and more ACT gardeners are seeking safe and organic ways to keep garden pests and diseases at bay. While there are some 'nasties' associated with using chemical pesticides, just allowing nature to take its course may not always be the answer. Here are some sustainable pest control strategies you can try in your garden.





## Mix plants in each bed

Insect pests are often attracted to specific plant types. When plantings are mixed in each of your garden beds, pests are less likely to spread throughout a whole crop. Avoid planting out an entire garden bed with the same fruit or vegetable.



## Rotate your crops

Crop rotation means moving vegetable groups from one bed to another each year. This can reduce the likelihood of diseases and pests attacking your crops. It also adds nutrients to the soil for the following crop. Try dividing your garden into four sections, then follow this simple guide by rotating the groupings each year:

- Group 1: Corn, lettuce and other leafy crops, pumpkins, potatoes, silverbeet, tomato, spinach, cucumber, zucchini, squash
- Group 2: Beans, peas, clover, alfalfa
- Group 3: Beetroot, carrots, garlic, leeks, onions, parsnips, capsicum, chilli, eggplant, celeriac
- Group 4: Broccoli, cabbage, radish, turnips, Chinese greens, rocket

You can experiment with combinations, but avoid growing plants from the same group in the same spot year after year.

## Avoid stressed plants

Pests often take advantage of weak or distressed plants, particularly those suffering from heat stress. The most common signs of heat stress are sunburned foliage and

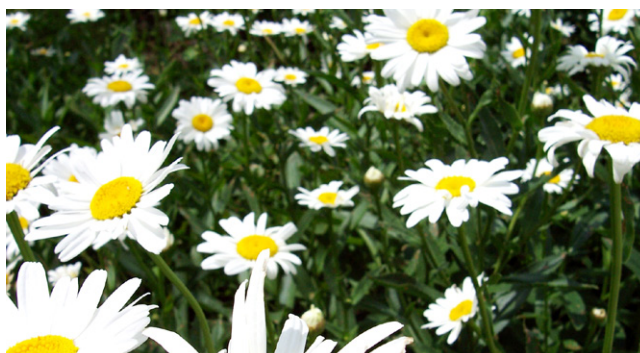
wilting. During spells of hot weather, water regularly and deeply. Mulch the soil with at least 75mm of organic mulch. Shade your crops, especially leafy greens and lettuces, to prevent them going to seed.

## Attract beneficial insects

By growing plants that provide nectar for beneficial insects, you can attract the kinds of insects that help keep pests in check. Beneficial insects include lacewings, ladybugs, assassin bugs, praying mantis, carabid beetles, braconid wasps, cotesia wasps.



To attract these 'good' insects, try growing the following plants near your productive garden beds: Calendula, Gaura, Shasta and Marguerite daisies, Gazania, Feverfew, Salvia, Yarrow, Gallardia, Cosmos, Nasturtium, Dianthus, Alyssum and Ageratum.



Allowing chickens and ducks to roam and clean up under fruit trees can help keep snails and slugs at bay.

## Respond quickly

If you have a disease or pest you're not sure about, consult your local nursery without delay.

General garden hygiene—such as picking up all infected fruit, destroying diseased plants and keeping garden areas clear and free of weeds—can help minimise pest damage or contain the issue before it gets out of control.

## Think about your local ecosystem

If you have possums or bird life in your area, consider growing enough for everyone to support the local wildlife.

For more ideas, tips and information

**visit:** [actsmart.act.gov.au](http://actsmart.act.gov.au)  
**email:** [actsmart@act.gov.au](mailto:actsmart@act.gov.au)  
**or call:** 13 22 81

For more advice on gardening without pesticides, visit [abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/pests\\_diseases\\_weeds.htm](http://abc.net.au/gardening/factsheets/pests_diseases_weeds.htm)

**make (the) change**