



The Growing Green Series

A Healthier Environment, One Meal at a Time

NATURAL PEST CONTROL

Using Nature as our First Line of Defense

Who We Are

Fruit and vegetable growers throughout Pennsylvania, as well as many other crop farmers, utilize natural pest control methods during the growing season. They sell the products they grow in many ways, on farm, at farmers markets, to restaurants, and through cooperatives or wholesale distributors.

What Have We Done

These farmers do their part to protect nature and their neighbors by practicing natural pest control, also known as IPM. To reduce the spraying of potentially harmful pesticides, the farmer or their employees will stop and evaluate what type and amount of pests are causing damage before deciding how to control them. The farm will consider options such as planting "trap crops" to lure pests away from the food you eat, or introducing natural predators of the pest insect before the pest population gets too big. What's great about this system is that it is effective, good for the environment, and it can be adapted quickly if new types of pests are found on the farm.



Inspecting a cherry tree for pests

When and Where We Control Pests

A farmer may decide to use natural pest controls after experiencing crop loss due to pest damage or in anticipation of a problem. Each crop and orchard has different needs, so the farmers and staff are trained to spot issues and pests early so that they can be managed before getting out of control.



Photo Courtesy of USDA NRCS

Farmer inspecting an insect trap in apple orchard



Photo Courtesy of USDA NRCS

Spot spraying weeds is a preferred method that can be used by farmers and homeowners

Why You Should Care

Most farmers believe that the care of land and water contributes to the care and safety of your family. When you buy from farmers using natural pest control, you are helping them to do our part to make clean, healthy food available to you without harm to the environment.



Fresh and locally produced food tastes better, and it's better for our local economy and environment.



Fresh food is healthier for kids of all ages.



As a result of the improvements described here, the waterways that run through these farms are cleaner, benefitting everyone downstream.



Wildlife neighbors appreciate the cleaner waterways even more than you do!

Capital RC&D's Growing Green Series promotes local farms that produce fresh, high quality, healthy foods using farm practices that keep our water clean and our families safe.

