

Bring on the Coffee: Coffee grounds are a great addition to your garden. They add nitrogen to the soil, they increase the acidity for acid loving plants, and, best of all, a wide range of creatures can't stand coffee grounds. Slugs hate coffee, cats hate coffee; it's even sometimes an effective olfactory-based repellent for picky deer. What's that you say? You hate coffee and have no coffee grounds to work with? Stop by your local Starbucks and ask. They have a policy of giving away their mountains of spent grounds for patrons to use for composting and other projects.

## How to Make Organic Pepper Spray for Plants

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Insects can devour your garden in matter of days. Keeping bugs and pests out of the garden can be a challenge, particularly if you are opposed to using insecticides or commercial products on your plants. Fortunately, hot peppers are an effective way to control most garden pests. Making your own organic pepper spray takes a little work, but the results are an organic repellent that will not harm your plants or pose a risk to your family.

### Things You'll Need

- 6 hot peppers
- 2 to 3 tbsp. oil (vegetable or mineral)
- 3 tbsp. dish detergent
- A one liter jar , piece of cloth, Spray bottle

### Instructions

Mince six hot peppers with a sharp knife. Use care not to touch your face or eyes after handling hot peppers as the juice will burn sensitive skin.

Place the minced peppers in a glass jar and cover with 2 to 3 tablespoons of oil. You can use mineral oil if preferred, but any cooking oil will do. Mix to distribute the oil.

Replace the lid and allow to soak 24 to 48 hours.

Add 1 pint of water and 3 tbsp. of liquid dish detergent. Mix all ingredients with a wooden spoon.

Strain through a double layer of cheesecloth to removed the peppers. Store in a tightly closed mason jar.

Fill a spray bottle with 2 tbsp. of the solution to 1 pint of water.

Spray plants in the morning or in early evening to prevent damage to sensitive plants in the heat of the day.

Check plant sensitivity to the solution by spraying a few leaves. If they do not show signs of damage within four days, it is safe to use the solution on the plant. Some sensitive plants may require a weaker solution.

#### Instructions

Break apart one head of garlic. There is no need to peel it but you should chop off the hard end, as it will just be in the way in the blender. Throw them into the blender with 2 cups of hot water. Blend the garlic until it is finely minced, about 3 minutes.

Pour the water/garlic mixture into a mason jar and cover tightly. Set it aside for at least 12 hours, overnight works well. The garlic flavors and oils will dissolve into the water. Strain into a quart container, using a fine-meshed strainer so that no particles come through.

Mix the strained garlic water and 1 teaspoon of Ivory dish soap and pour into a spray bottle.

Spray the plants with the garlic spray, coating it until it is wet with the spray. Spray early in the day or in the late afternoon when the heat of the day will not cause the soap to hurt the foliage. The soap will break the surface tension, causing many bugs to suffocate, while the garlic will make the plant taste terrible for the bugs.

Reapply the garlic spray after every rain, since the water will rinse it off the plants

#### Soapy Water

- Simple soapy water works to keep some insects off your vegetable plants. Mix your soap and water in a spray bottle, 3 parts water to 1 part dish soap. To use the mixture, simply spray the soapy water on your vegetable plants. Soak the leaves and any growing produce thoroughly. If it rains or if you water your garden, you may want to spray the plants again, as the soap will wash off.

#### Lemon Grass

- Use Thai lemon grass to make a concoction that some insects do not like. Crush 1/2 cup of lemon grass leaves, and put them in a spray bottle. Fill the rest of the bottle with rubbing alcohol. Spray this on your plants at the first sign of bugs. To prevent possible foliage damage, allow the solution to remain on the foliage for two hours and then off rinse with water

#### Vegetable Oil

- Vegetable oil is an inexpensive way to keep bugs off your vegetables. You will need 1 cup of vegetable oil and 1 tablespoon of dish soap. Add 1 1/2 teaspoons of the oil mixture to 1 cup of water and mix well. Fill a spray bottle with the mixture and spray the vegetable's foliage. To prevent possible plant injury, test the solution on a small portion of foliage before using it on the entire plant. Wait 24 hours and if foliage injury does not occur, spray the entire plant. Do not use the mixture on plants when conditions are sunny and temperatures are above 80 degrees F. Spray the vegetable plants late in the evening. Use weekly to keep bugs at bay.

#### Garlic

- Garlic is another ingredient that helps keep bugs off your vegetables. Grate a whole head of raw garlic, and mix it with 1 cup of vegetable oil. Store this mixture in the refrigerator for two days, or until the oil has a very strong garlic smell. Once the garlic smell is very strong, separate the garlic from the oil. Fill a spray bottle with 3 cups of warm water, 3 teaspoons of the garlic-infused oil and 2 teaspoons of dish soap. Mix the ingredients thoroughly. Spray the mixture on your plants at the first sign of insect damage. To prevent plant damage, test the mixture on a small portion of the plant's foliage. Wait 24 hours and if damage does not occur, spray the entire plant. Do not apply to foliage when conditions are above 80 degrees F. and sunny. Apply the mixture late in the evening

Basil: Tomatoes are improved if basil is planted by them. Repels : Mosquitoes, aphids, flies, and tomato hornworms.

Chives: Helps deter carrot rust flies and Japanese beetles, and produce beautiful, purple flowers.

Garlic: Planted by carrots, garlic will repel flies, and otherwise they can also repel rabbits, chipmunks, squirrels, and other critters, or mosquitoes and snails.

Oregano: Last, but not least, oregano is an herb with great beneficial medicinal properties, and of course it is commonly used in cooking as well. Oregano repels aphids, cabbage worms, and cucumber beetles, and possibly other pests in addition

#### Simple soap spray

This spray kills a wide variety of soft bodied insects, including spider mites, mealybugs, aphids, and whiteflies.

- 1 tablespoon natural liquid dishwashing soap
- 2.5 liters (4 pints) water
- Avoid spraying plants in the sun

- To prevent the sun's rays from damaging a plant's leaves, use soap and other insecticide sprays in the evening or on a cloudy day

#### Simple garlic spray

Garlic fends off many leaf-eating garden pests.

- 1 head chopped garlic
- 1.25 liters (2 pints) warm water

Mix the ingredients and steep for four hours. Strain through a piece of cloth, pour into a spray bottle, and spray affected plants every other day for two weeks

#### Tomato leaf spray

Tomato leaves are rich in alkaloids that are highly toxic to insects. A tomato leaf spray can help to control aphids and corn earworms.

- 80g (2.75oz) chopped tomato leaves
- 1.25 liters (2 pints) water
- 1 teaspoon natural liquid dishwashing soap

Soak the tomato leaves in water overnight. Strain through a piece cloth, pour into sprayer, and add the soap. Shake well. and spray your plants liberally.

#### Control aphids

One of the most common garden pests, aphids multiply rapidly and blanket tender new growth of roses, vegetables, and perennials. Aphids weaken plants by sucking out the sap. This spray helps to control them.

- 1 teaspoon natural liquid dishwashing soap
- 2 teaspoons light cooking oil
- 2.5 liters (4 pints) water

Combine the soap, oil, and 250ml (12 oz) of water and mix together thoroughly. Pour the mixture into a pump-type garden sprayer. Shake well, add the remaining water, and then shake again. Liberally spray each and every aphid-infested plant with the solution once a week and after each shower of rain until the aphids are under control

#### Eggshell barrier to combat slugs and snails

To discourage slugs and snails from gaining access to your plants, place a generous barrier of coarsely crushed eggshells in a circle around the base of each plant

Get rid of earwigs with oil and molasses

Earwigs are small brown insects with telltale pincers protruding from their backsides. They like to feed on soft plants such as lettuces and flowers. They hide during the day and come out at night to feed. To make a trap for earwigs fill an unwashed 175g (6oz) tuna can with 12mm (0.5in) of vegetable oil and half a teaspoon of molasses. Place several cans of this mixture around your garden near susceptible plants. Replace weekly or as needed