Upcoming Events and Classes

**Allegany County**
May 11 | Soil Health and Composting | Western MD Health System auditorium

**Anne Arundel County**
May 16 | Vegetable Gardening for Beginners

**Baltimore City**
May 19 | Container Gardening

**Baltimore County**
May 11 | Intro to Composting and Vermicomposting

**Calvert County**
June 6 | Intro to Floral Design

**Carroll County**
May 18 | Edible Landscaping/Vertical Gardening

**Charles County**

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### May Tips:

**Buying and growing vegetable transplants**

Eggplant on left was grown in a larger container and may produce higher yields in the garden. Eggplant on right was grown in a 3-in. square container. It is very healthy and the roots trailing out of the bottom of the pot are normal.

- Plants should be stocky with thick stems, and not long and spindly. Root systems should be fibrous, and healthy.
- Remove flower buds and open flowers of pepper plants (see video).
- The root systems of squash, melon, and cucumber plants are easily damaged when transplanting. Treat them gently and take good care of them.
- If tomato plants overgrow their container pot them up into a larger container (see video).

Search the [UMD HGIC YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7S0v_JJn3Fz04r3FykhK7Iqbd174Iw3n) for dozens of food gardening videos, including how to plant, cage, and prune tomato plants.

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**Beans & Peas!**

2015 is the Year of Beans & Peas for the Grow It Eat It program. These are great crops for beginners. Bush garden beans can be planted every 2-3 weeks for harvests all summer long. Southern peas are delicious and can take hot summer weather. These crops are legumes- a plant family...
that can take nitrogen from air and convert it (with the help of soil bacteria) to ammonium that plants can use.

Growing information for beans and southern peas can be found in Vegetable Profiles. Be on the lookout this summer for the kudzu bug, an exotic insect that feeds on kudzu, soybean, and garden beans. Contact us through Ask a Gardening Expert if you observe them this summer.

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**All GIEI Classes**

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**Featured Videos**

**Growing Tomatoes Playlist**

Brush up on your tomato skills this season. Check out our series of videos with top tomato tips.

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**Ask Maryland's Garden Experts your plant and pest questions online here.**

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**Have You Seen This?**
I recently added a top dressing of recently purchased hardwood mulch to my perennial garden and it appears to be "burning" the young plants. Some plants die back outright and some have the outside leaves turn almost white in color. Can you tell me what is happening?

From your description and photo it looks like you may be dealing with "sour mulch", also known as "wood alcohol syndrome." We do not test for this. The mulch will have a very strong alcohol-like odor as opposed to the pleasant mild smell of properly stored mulch. If you have any doubts about your mulch, aerate the pile and allow it to dry out before using the mulch. Once the mulch is spread the alcohol evaporates fast. Spread or rake the mulch out and make sure there is no smell. The sour mulch usually burns the foliage and does not affect the roots much. Cut back any damaged annuals and perennials and remove any dead plants.

More information on Sour Mulch

Have long-winged insects—or just piles of wings—appeared in your home or porch? Do the insects walk more than fly, their wings fall off, and most simply die? They are the reproductive stage of termites known as swarmers or alates. Though most dry up harmlessly, they indicate a mature termite colony nearby. Your home should be inspected, then treated if necessary. To distinguish them from winged ants, think *even* and *straight*. Termite bodies are fairly even in width. The four wings are even lengths; the antennae are fairly straight. (In contrast, for winged ants, think *uneven* and *crooked*—sharply pinched waists, uneven wings, crooked antennae.)

Read more on the HGIC website

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