



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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Keep Critters Out

Sallie Strole, Johnson's East Store

The first hint of fall makes us dream of cozy nights at home, but we are not alone in our desire for a snug nesting place. There are uninvited critters like crickets, spiders, roaches and boxelder bugs all eyeing your house as a potential winter retreat. There are a few simple precautions which will keep these unwanted "guests" outside and allow you to relax and enjoy your home.

The first is the physical barrier of tightly sealed doors and windows. This will close the door on pests as well as cold drafts.

As bug proof as you can make your home, there still will be some insects sneaking in through the attic, crawl space or open doors. To cut down on that possibility, use a barrier treatment around the foundation. Hi-Yield Kill-A-Bug II is a granular insecticide you can broadcast in a band around the perimeter. It contains permethrin, a long-lasting synthetic pyrethrum, that is effective against a wide range of insects. Permethrin is also available in liquid forms which can be sprayed on the sides of buildings, into cracks and on the soil around the foundation.

Hi-Yield Lawn, Garden, Pet and Livestock Control is a 10% permethrin concentration with label instructions for use on vegetables and ornamental plants as well as for borers and nuisance pest outside the house. New this fall is Hi-Yield 38 Plus, a super concentrate with 38% permethrin, labeled to control termites, carpenter ants, spiders and other home invading pests.

After you have finished outside, it's time to move indoors. Hi-Yield D.I.Y. is an aerosol containing pyrethrum, permethrin and Nylar (a growth regulator). This combination gives you professional results against spiders, ants, fleas and other pests for up to four months. In areas near food there are several organic options to control nuisance insects. Concern Citrus Home Pest Control is a citrus based repellent and insecticide safe to use around food and pets.

Another new product this fall, that is safe in food areas, is Natural Guard Lawn, Plant and Pet Insect Spray. It contains cedar oil to repel and disrupt the life functions of insects.

While these products will list spiders, those eight-legged wonders are difficult to control. If spiders are a particular concern, use Big H Hobo and Brown Recluse Spider Traps. These are pre-baited, non-poisonous traps that spiders stick to; and then the whole trap can be thrown away.

By using some or all of these methods in combination you can make sure the only guests in your home this fall and winter are the ones invited by you. ■