How to control factors that cause common plant diseases?

How to keep your garden disease free? Learn to control factors that cause common plant diseases. No matter where your garden is located, you will have to deal with plant diseases. Even if you have had good luck in the past, there will come a day when disease strikes your plants. Plant diseases can be caused by many factors including plants that have disease when purchased, bugs or weather. Weather conditions many change in your area, becoming hotter, colder, or wetter than is normal for your area. All of these factors can make your plants more susceptible to disease. You cannot control Mother Nature, but you can pick plants that are more disease resistant for your area. Have you ever heard the old saying, "Talk to your plants and they will be happier and healthier?" Maybe that is because when you are talking to them, you are really looking closer at the plant and paying attention to what is going on. By talking to your plant, you notice if the leaves are getting droopy, turning yellow, have bugs, or are showing signs of disease such as black matter, water spots, or powdery mildew.

Here are a few tips to help you keep your garden disease free:

1. **Try the quarantine program**. When purchasing new plants, keep them separated from existing plants (2-3 days) to see if the new plants have bugs or droopy or discolored leaves. Just check out the basic overall health of the plants.
2. **Improve your soil.** Bottom line-healthy soil produces good microorganisms and helps keep the bad microorganisms under control.
3. **Rotate plantings.** Plant something different in each area every year to keep soil borne diseases from infecting your plants.
4. **Space plants properly.** Space plants far enough apart, so that the air can circulate between plants.
5. **Mulch.** Mulching helps to keep water and rain from splashing back up on your plants.
6. **Control fungus.** If you detect air borne fungus, use Physan 20 immediately.
7. **Control insects.** Keep insect population down to help control viruses. Spray-N-Grow offers a variety of products to control insects including Bon-Neem Insecticidal Soap Concentrate and Bonide Rotenone-Pyrethrins.
8. **Keep a good sanitation program going.** Pinch off diseased leaves and rake up all leaves, fruits and vegetables that have fallen. Be sure to keep branches and limbs pruned, so they do not touch the ground.

9. **Keep foliage as dry as possible.** Water early in the morning, which gives plants a chance to dry out quickly. Allow soil to dry slightly in between watering. Provide good drainage and make sure there is no low spot where all the water stands.
10. **Sanitize.** Always be sure after working with infected plants, to wash your hands, and sterilize tools in bleach or Physan 20.

I am a gardener who enjoys growing vegetables, herbs and flowers. I believe in using organic methods and products when gardening.

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