

Homegrown Cannabis

Cannabis plants are susceptible to many pests including insects, mites, fungi and bacteria. The way you treat cannabis plants will be different from the way you care for other houseplants due to the fact the plant may be inhaled or ingested. It is recommended that you carefully consider which pest control strategy you choose, as some may impact your health.

Key Concepts

- Cannabis plants are susceptible to many common pests that may transfer from other plants in your home and garden.
- Pest control options for cannabis will differ from those of houseplants, even where the pests are the same.
- There are additional safety considerations for pest management strategies because cannabis can be inhaled or ingested.
- Following pesticide label instructions is the law.
- Controlling pests on homegrown cannabis relies on an Integrated Pest Management approach.
- Currently there are no registered domestic class pesticides for use on homegrown cannabis.

Pest Management Approach for Cannabis

Whether for your house or garden plants or for cannabis plants, only pesticides with a registration number from the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) should be used.

A pesticide must always be used according to its label instructions. In Canada, a pesticide cannot be used unless the product label indicates that it can be used both for that particular plant and for the particular pest. This includes conventional chemical pesticides as well as products labeled as low-risk, natural or organic.

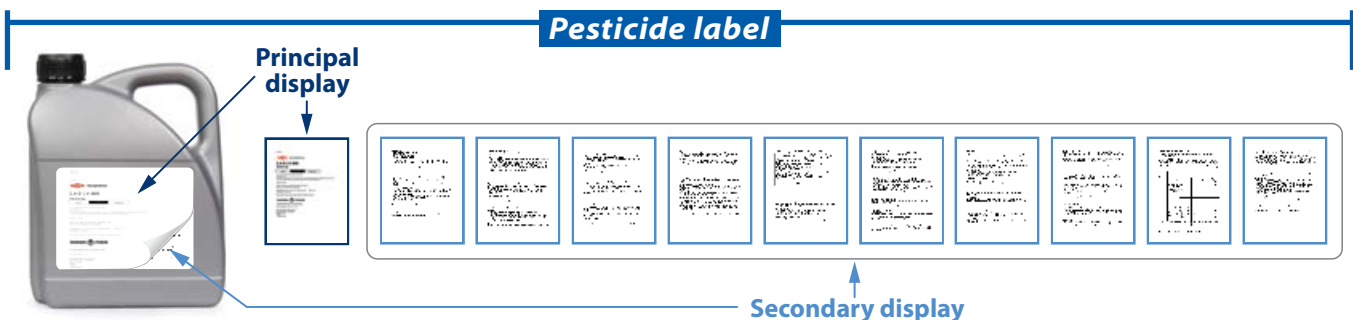
A label will also indicate who can use the pesticide. Pesticides that are classified as 'domestic' are intended for use around the home, but currently there are no registered domestic pesticides for use on homegrown cannabis. Because home growers cannot yet use pesticides, managing pests focuses on pest prevention and non-chemical treatments.

Pesticide Health Concerns

- While pesticides may be available and safe for your house or garden plants, do not assume these same options can be safely used on cannabis as it may be ingested or inhaled and pesticide residues may remain.
- Pesticide residues can become more concentrated when cannabis is processed into concentrates, oils or extracts.
- If cannabis is smoked, the burning of any pesticide residues on the plant could alter the chemical composition of the pesticide and create additional health risks.

What is a pesticide label?

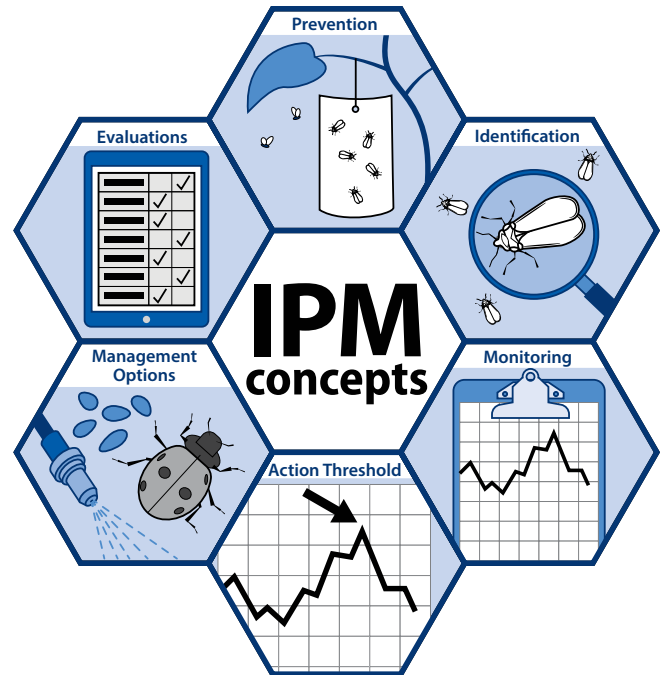
- It explains what the product is, who can use it, how it must be used and provides safety information.
- A pesticide label is a legal document.
- Full pesticide labels can be found online at <http://pr-rp.hc-sc.gc.ca/lr-re/index-eng.php>





Integrated Pest Management for homegrown cannabis

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a decision-making process that brings together different types of pest control options.
- IPM encourages a proactive and preventive approach to pests.
- This involves pest prevention and identification, monitoring pest presence and levels, determining acceptable levels of pest damage, considering different management options for those pests and damage, and evaluating the outcome.
- Pest management options can include biological, cultural, mechanical, behavioural or chemical controls.



Biological Controls

- Are treatments for pests, such as beneficial insects and mites.
- Many of these natural enemies are available commercially.
- Are one non-chemical tool that can be used in an IPM system.

A homegrown cannabis IPM program uses pest prevention and non-chemical treatments. If pests do occur, proper identification is key when considering control measures. Please see the fact sheet, *Common Pests on Homegrown Cannabis*, for help in identifying and controlling these pests.

Please email the Integrated Pest Management Program at BC.IPM@gov.bc.ca for any questions about pest control on homegrown cannabis.

Pest Prevention Tips

- Inspect all plants for signs of pests or pest damage prior to bringing them into your home.
- Monitor other house and garden plants. It is easier to keep pests numbers low rather than responding to an outbreak.
- Keep plants healthy. In general, healthy plants grown under the right conditions will be less stressed and better able to defend against certain pests and pathogens.
- Avoid overwatering.
- Implement good sanitation practices:
 1. Use sterilized potting mix;
 2. Sterilize tools, pots, trays, pruners, and growing shelves between use and crop cycles;
 3. Change clothes prior to handling your cannabis plants if you have been working in the garden to avoid bringing pests inside; and
 4. Do not leave bags of potting mix outside for extended periods. Soil dwelling pests can enter into the ventilation holes and be transferred inside.
- Choose disease-resistant varieties.