

Planting a Trap

Trap cropping is luring bugs away from your vegetables to another plant. This is a safe, nonchemical approach to insect control. Here's a few suggestions that you can try. Don't forget to remove and destroy the trap crop, or remove the pests from the trap crop once it becomes infested. Here are some examples:

Pest	Trap Crop
Aphid	Nasturtium
Cabbage maggot	Radish, turnip
Colorado potato beetle	Radish
Flea beetle	Bok choy, radish
Japanese beetle	Borage, white zinnia
Leaf miner	Radish, lamb's-quarters
Mexican bean beetle	Lima bean
Squash bug	Radish
Tomato hornworm	Dill
Whitefly	Flowering tobacco (<i>Nicotiana sp</i>)

This list is probably not exhaustive...if you find others let me know. If you try this, let me know so that all our plot holders can join in the fun (experiment!).

Other Mulch Options

I've had several gardeners ask about other alternatives to mulch during the season or cover your plots at the end of the season. Here are some suggestions:

Compost: hands down the best alternative. Either leaf compost or compost from kitchen scraps and other plant material.

Grass clippings: Widely available and inexpensive. Just don't use clippings from a lawn treated with herbicides or weed killers. High in nitrogen. Don't use them fresh since all that nitrogen could burn tender young plants.

Hay: Adds nitrogen, but can contain weed seeds.

Leaves: right off the trees in fall! Excellent source of nutrients and a good soil conditioner. Recommend chopping or shredding first.

Mushroom Compost: Good source of nutrients and is sometimes available commercially in smaller bags. Be sure it hasn't been treated with pesticides.

Newsprint: yes, but who prints their news anymore? Good weed suppressor, but needs to be weighted down or it will blow all over the garden.

Pine needles/straw: Generally weed free and decomposes slowly. Can lower pH. Good weed suppressor.

Sawdust: Must be aged before used or will rob nitrogen from the soil and lower pH. Good weed suppressor.

Straw: Good soil conditioner and free of weed seeds. Slow to decompose.

Source: adapted from *The Complete Vegetable & Herb Gardener: A Guide to Growing Your Garden Organically*.