



## Question of the Week

**Q: I grow a variety of plants that have had trouble with powdery mildew. What can I do to prevent and treat this problem?**

**A:** Powdery mildew is a fungal disease that typically appears as a superficial white or gray powdery growth over the surface of leaves, stems, flowers, or fruit of affected plants. Patches may enlarge until they cover entire leaves. The disease favors wet, warm conditions for its development.

Although it usually isn't fatal, powdery mildew may hasten plant defoliation and fall dormancy, and the infected plant may become unsightly. You can help your plants avoid infection by following these cultural practices:

- Select powdery mildew-resistant varieties.
- Plant in full sunlight in a well-drained area.
- Don't crowd plants. Air flow and ventilation will discourage mildew growth.
- Don't over-fertilize. Powdery mildew thrives where high rates of nitrogen have been used.
- Rogue out or prune plants to get rid of infected parts and increase airflow. If the infestation is severe, remove and destroy all infected plants.
- Disinfect your pruning tool in a bleach solution of one part household bleach to four parts water after each cut.
- Water plants in the morning to give them the rest of the day to dry off, discouraging establishment of many diseases, including powdery mildew.

Several fungicides will control powdery mildew: Thiophanate-methyl (Cleary's 3336, Domain), potassium bicarbonate, jobhoba oil, neem oil, and sulfur. Always apply any pesticide according to label directions.

Got questions? UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home & Garden Education Center Info Line offers practical help finding answers for your lawn and garden questions. Call toll free at 1-877-398-4769, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., or e-mail us at [answers@ceunh.unh.edu](mailto:answers@ceunh.unh.edu)