



Question of the Week

Q. Help! I have wasps or bees flying around inside and outside my house!

A. Wasps and bees are beneficial insects, although they are often considered pests because of their ability to sting. Aggressive wasp species, particularly yellow jackets, can become a problem in autumn, when their natural food supplies dwindle and their colonies have grown large.

Yellow jackets and other wasps are attracted to garbage cans, discarded soda containers, dumpsters and other sources of food. Your first lines of defense will be to eliminate food sources and make sure cracks in your home and buildings are caulked and sealed. Once you've located the nest, try to avoid it if possible. If the colony is located in an area near where people travel, in wall voids, or on low-hanging parts of the house, you may choose to eliminate the entire colony with a pressurized "jet-spray" pesticide labeled for the purpose. *If you are highly allergic to stings, don't attempt to do this yourself; hire an exterminator.*

The wasp colony dies in the late fall, with only the mated queens surviving the winter. These queens become active the following spring when temperatures warm, but won't reuse the old nests.

If you have wasps inside your home, use a fly swatter or an aerosol spray *formulated for indoor use* to eliminate individual wasps. Always read the label before using a pesticide and follow its directions precisely.

For additional information about wasps, see our fact sheet:

<http://extension.unh.edu/Pubs/HGPubs/wasphorn.pdf>

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@unh.edu