

Edible Gardening Series with Sarah Bostick and Carol Wyatt-Evens UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County

Resources from Session 10: Picture Perfect – Taking Photos for Insect and Plant Identification

Connecting with Experts

- **UF/IFAS Insect ID Lab**
 - <http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/insectid/>
- **University of Florida DDIS (Distance Diagnostics and Identification System)**
 - (<https://ddis.ifas.ufl.edu/>)
- **Your local University of Florida Extension office:**
 - <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/find-your-local-office/>

Tips on photographing plants, insects, and fungi

- **Fungi** – taking diagnostic quality photos of fungi such as mushrooms is a bit different! This is a very helpful guide to what a mycologist (mushroom scientist) needs to see:
 - <https://plantpath.ifas.ufl.edu/misc/media/fungi-submission.pdf>
- **Plants and Insects** – this is a blog post that walks you through the five most important elements of taking pictures of plants and insects that are useable for identification and diagnosis.
 - <http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/sarasotaco/2020/12/15/edible-gardening-series-question-of-the-week-taking-diagnostic-photos/>

Answers to the unanswered question asked during Q&A

Question: Can I use hydrogen peroxide to sanitize my soil? Will this kill all of the bad stuff that makes my plants sick?

Answer: Good question! We regularly get questions about things that fall into a category that I call “home gardening remedies”. Home gardening remedies are gardening practices that are shared amongst gardeners and passed down through the generations, but don’t have formal scientific research to either prove or disprove their effectiveness. Neither Carol nor I had ever heard of a home gardening remedy of hydrogen peroxide until one of you asked the question yesterday. I did some digging around and found one published study from 1977 that addressed the use of hydrogen peroxide in soil. To me, this says that there is little to no scientific backing for the use of hydrogen peroxide as a soil sanitizer. Because there does not appear to be research on the topic, we don’t know if it is an effective remedy and we also don’t know what unintended impacts it might have on your soil and abundant life within it.

Another sign that hydrogen peroxide is not meant for use in soil is the label on the bottle. The federally regulated use label on a hydrogen peroxide bottle says this:

- First aid to help prevent the risk of infection in minor cuts, scrapes, and burns
- Aids in the removal of phlegm, mucus, or other secretions associated with occasional sore mouth.

This is a product meant for use on a human body.

Here is a tip for doing your own fact checking of home gardening remedies: type a description of a remedy followed by “.edu” into your favorite search engine. This will pull up anything published by a college or university on the subject. An example of a search you can do: “hydrogen peroxide soil .edu”. Give it a try! It is a really neat way to get right to the research.

Feel free to reach out with questions any time!

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