

**Updates Regarding the UVM Master Gardener Helpline
Seed Starting and Spotted Lanternfly
Ann Hazelrigg**



Septoria leaf spot. UMD

I imagine Vermont gardeners are perusing seed catalogs and beginning to think about starting seeds for transplants. If you have not already done so, it is helpful to think about the plants and cultivars you used last year and consider what worked and what didn't. I always try to write that down at the end of the season, but it does not always happen.

If you had specific diseases (like powdery mildews or tomato leaf spots), it is helpful to look at the tolerance of different cultivars to those diseases. Although 'resistant' varieties are not immune, they often suffer less from the specific disease.

When planting seeds, make sure you start with clean flats (no visible soil and soaked in a fresh 10% bleach solution for 30

minutes), use a good soilless (i.e., sterile) mix, and keep flats warm and not overly wet.



Powdery mildew on squash leaves. Gerald



"Damping off" in seedlings caused by 4-5 different fungi

Most root rot disease pathogens, like those that cause 'damping off', prefer cool, wet conditions and can rapidly kill off an entire flat of young seedlings. If that does happen, it is best to not try to rescue those, but start over with new seed and clean

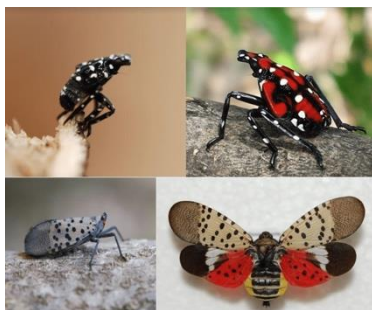
flats. Heating mats are often a great tool for starting seedlings since they keep

the soil warm and not overly wet, enabling the plants to germinate quickly.

THE HELPLINE

The update is that we have no updates! We will have to wait until UVM has determined what will be allowed on campus because of the latest Omicron variant and high infection rates. That being said, helpline volunteers continue to answer questions using the "Ask Extension portal."

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY



Spotted lantern fly adult and nymphs. Erica Myers, PSU.

(*Lycorma delicatula*; SLF), a new invasive pest, has recently been found in Shrewsbury, MA in a small stand of trees. This is the second detection of a population of this insect in Massachusetts, following confirmation of SLF in the city of Fitchburg, MA in 2021. This plant bug is beautiful but can be deadly to grapes and other crops. Please

contact the UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic if you see this pest! For more information on lifecycle and damage go to the link below.



Nymphs feeding on grape vines. Erica Myers, PSU

https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Plants_Land_Water/PlantIndustry/Entomology/spotted_lanternfly/SpottedLanternflyAlert/Pages/default.aspx