

Controlling Cucumber Beetles

Cucumber beetles are among the most serious pests vegetable growers face. They attack squash, pumpkins, watermelon, cucumbers, and other plants in the family *Cucurbitaceae*. They kill or stunt seedlings, damage stems and fruits, and can transmit fatal bacterial wilt.

Practicing Integrated Pest Management

Cornell Botanic Gardens Staff practice Integrated Pest Management, which brings together a range of biological, organic, cultural, mechanical, and chemical approaches to prevent or reduce pest problems.

It's called "management" because it's difficult to fully eliminate pests, which include fungi, bacteria, viruses, weeds, wildlife, and more.

Sticky traps and a bug vacuum

We control populations organically by placing traps for them near cucurbits. The lure has pheromones that attract the beetles – not other insects – then the yellow sticky paper traps them. We also remove as many as we can with our handmade bug vacuum.



Adult striped cucumber beetle (left); adult spotted cucumber beetle (right)

**Look for the yellow traps in the squash bed.
Do you see striped or spotted cucumber beetles on them?**