

OSU EXTENSION NEWS

Spraying for insects in winter

As we have moved into winter here in Pittsburg County, now is a great time to look at insect control. Many insects such as mites, gall forming insects, aphids, etc., have an overwintering stage or hide out on plants during winter months in cracks and crevices of trunks and stems. One way to control them and keep their numbers to a low roar this growing season is to spray them with horticultural oil during the winter months.

Horticulture oils are petroleum-based products containing certain fatty acids that form layers on plant parts to smother insects and provide a mechanical barrier to prevent damage. There are two kinds of oils: growing season (summer) and dormant. Some common examples include:

- Sunspray (6E Plus): Normal dormant use. Summer use on vegetables, greenhouse ornamentals, flower and foliage plants, some fruit



David Cantrell
OSU EXTENSION

and nut trees, some field crops, blueberries, grapes and citrus.

- Ortho Volck Oil Spray: Dormant and summer use on citrus, fruit and shade trees, evergreens, and some shrubs.

- Scalecide: Dormant and summer use on fruit and shade trees, ornamentals, evergreen and small fruit. Indoor or outdoor use.

“Dormant” refers to the time of year the application is made. Remember, as a general rule, that oils control insects, not plant diseases. Dormant oil should not be applied when the temperature is below 40° F and if there is a danger of freezing. Some dormant oil sprays should not be applied to evergreens or to certain deciduous tree species. Be sure to read and follow the product label. For more information on insect control, contact your local OSU Extension.