



# OFFICE INTERNATIONAL

du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

association sans but lucratif

1926-2016  
90 ans

Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux  
Membre d'Europa Nostra  
Statut participatif auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

20 rue de Bragance, L-1255 Luxembourg



The Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux and the affiliated federations call upon all allotment gardeners to take part in the Week without pesticides organised from 20th till 30th March 2020.



Association Agricole  
Ligue Luxembourgeoise du  
Coin de Terre et du Foyer



**A week without pesticides 2020**  
**Can we make difference – Yes, we can.**

**There are many alternatives to the application of harmful chemicals and it is important experimenting straight away with these alternatives. Protect our environment, have fun and continue to enjoy your gardening in a more natural way without the use of chemicals.**

With our love of gardening and growing activities we have become the guardians of the extremely important green corridors in the urban environment. These corridors include parks, woodland, household gardens and allotments. Recent scientific research has proved beyond doubt that allotments are the most beneficial to the community and to these green corridors. They are more fertile, produce more crops per sq.m. than agricultural and commercial growers, are more environmentally diverse and offer a greater carbon sink than any other type of land usage, even woodland. With all that in mind it is crucial we protect these areas and our allotments to the best of our ability.

How can we do that?

By cutting down on the use of pesticides which contain a multitude of harmful often lethal chemicals we are helping to maintain the balance of nature. As we all know by eradicating one pest with chemicals quite often also affects other beneficial insects, not only by absorption of the chemicals but by ingestion by other insects and creatures in the food chain.

So how can we do this?

Let's take brassicas as an example, by simply covering them with a cloche of fine netting (ordinary netting allows butterflies to lay eggs through it), scaffold debris netting is a very good cheap option and has a multitude of benefits, it can dispense with the need for chemical sprays. It will not only keep butterflies at bay and resultant caterpillars but also provide a barrier to pigeons which can devastate your brassicas. It also creates a micro climate protecting plants from wind, scorching, allows rain through and retains moisture and heat reducing the need for watering. So, there are a multitude of benefits by simply erecting a fine netting cloche. However, what about aphids I hear you say, simply by complimentary planting of tagetes (marigolds) within the cloche should be an adequate deterrent to the aphids and it also works very well in poly-tunnels.

Aphids can also be eradicated with a simple bar soap solution which is a much more environmentally friendly way than spraying with chemicals. Also

watering brassicas in the earlier stages of growth with diluted comfrey and nettle juice does prove a deterrent to insects, maybe it is the strong smell that does it; this method is not a good idea near harvest time though. Another method is to spray with diluted garlic juice.

When it comes to weeds, constant hoeing will keep the weeds down and if caught before going to seed all the foliage can be composted creating another cost-free benefit for the garden. Even the most difficult of weeds such as mares' tail (*Equisetum arvense*) can be composted by rotting down in water or black plastic bag first or drying in the sun until completely brittle before adding to the compost heap.

If you collect water, which I hope you do, and collect it in an open container put a teaspoon of vegetable oil in it and it will stop mosquito larvae forming.