

On Mon, Nov 18, 2013 at 10:28 PM, Toronto Master Gardeners
<toronto.mg@hotmail.com> wrote:

Dear William and Norah,

We are very distressed that you are under the impression that Toronto Master Gardeners are proponents of illegal pesticides. On the contrary, it is our mission to educate the public in safe, sustainable and acceptable gardening practices. The good health of our gardens and our communities is very important to us. It is for two reasons that we have supported the April 2009 Ontario Pesticide Ban since it's inception, including the statement in Regulation 63/09 that 'using homemade pesticides is illegal'.

First, it is the policy of the Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc. that "all advice given by Master Gardener Volunteers when working under the authorization of the local group must be accordance with the laws of Ontario and the principles of an Integrated Pest Management strategy" (Coordinator's Handbook, Section 3, page 3, 2010, rev. 2013). Since homemade pesticides are illegal, we do not in good conscience recommend their production or use to the public.

Second, based on scientific research, the effects of homemade pesticides are truly not known. Because there is no conclusive evidence, Master Gardeners would not want to take the risk of recommending something that is potentially harmful to our cherished gardens and to the communities we are trying to help. Please see the very informative Health Canada documentation on the possible risks of homemade pesticides -- http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/alt_formats/pacrb-dgapcr/pdf/iyh-vsv/life-vie/homemade-artisanaux-eng.pdf .

Master Gardeners have strategies for dealing with pests that are organic and effective. We invite you to talk to your local Master Gardener. Visit our website which is full of factual, research based information -- torontomastergardeners.ca . And please, when you get there, do take advantage of our free 'ask a Master Gardener' service . We are delighted to answer individual gardening questions. It's what we do. Not in the Toronto area? There are Master Gardener groups all over Ontario, so please check out www.mgoi.ca for your local group. Again, thank you for your support, and we hope to be answering your gardening questions very soon.

Sincerely,

Tena

Tena van Andel
Executive Coordinator
Toronto Master Gardeners