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Blister Beetles in the Garden

Blister beetles will feed on just about any leaf that grows in your garden. They are found on tomato, potato, eggplant, peppers and other solanaceous vegetables as well leafy greens. In mid and late summer, they can arrive in swarms and cause a great amount of damage in a short time.

Blister beetles contain a chemical called cantharidin that is capable of producing painful blisters on human skin. Cantharidin is present in blister beetle hemolymph (blood) but can be exuded through reflexive bleeding when pressure is applied to the beetle. If you even brush a blister beetle against your skin while tending your garden, you may develop blisters (SDSU).

In gardens, it may be possible to remove blister beetle infestations by hand. However, gloves should be worn to avoid releasing the blister beetles cantharidin chemical. Ideally, one should use disposable gloves and be cautious not touch the gloves to unprotected skin. For severe infestations, insecticidal garden powder or spray may be used to reduce defoliation caused by blister beetles (SDSU). If using an insecticide, make sure to check the PHI (Post Harvest Interval) on the label prior to harvesting any fruit or vegetables to ensure your safety.

For any questions, please contact the Cherokee County Extension Office at 620-429-3849.

Source: [https://extension.sdstate.edu/blister-beetles-causing...](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fextension.sdstate.edu%2Fblister-beetles-causing-problems-gardens%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1ODSzZWJYYJxbon-HbtwMEOsKO1M4JzzUGqSwDCubs6gR5qahibXCp_Kc&h=AT0xV794eKoIvSI3Y9OchxIRrP2QRUwjvl-6h3xfXKGBzwwIBcpPRdbzV_vrolIVrMitUUbXUTHV-OS-ErAx-xbR0klva0sHc6LKA6J5-aPG_O2NrCAA-yZGazvLJBgANgKT&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT04pdQGhfmVdus_VdkCt5W5ci0OTCrQ7jcMIomsa6Xd14WrK-QXcnZlkBMJ7wF-wBj_ZRKzBWOfO2l0ZDcY3oRmuyWq3LBE9NIChg87TEoVqujYbm7mSGsed_60QMhu59SaE-d19466DN05jcAXJgOyjFyipGxpw-64TxtRDDGbCS5Y014QlkqIo-OzFNklDjNXpt0)

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