**Bt Thuricide Pest Control: Info For Controlling Pests With Thuricide Bacillus Thuringiensis**

You’ve likely heard the numerous recommendations for using Bt pest control, or *Bacillus thuringiensis*, in the home garden. But what exactly is this and how does using Bt in the garden work?

**What is Bacillus Thuringiensis?**

Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) is actually a naturally occurring bacterium, common in some soils, that causes disease in certain insects, most notably leaf and needle feeding caterpillars It was first discovered in the early 1900s. The French were the first to advocate using Bt in the garden and by the 1960s, Bacillus thuringiensis products were available on the open market and were readily embraced by the organic gardening community.

Controlling pests with Bacillus thuringiensis is dependent on its active ingredient, a crystal protein, which paralyzes the digestive system of the insect. The infected insect stops feeding and starves to death. While the original strains of Bt pest control were directed at caterpillars such as tomato, corn borers or earworms, cabbage loopers and leaf rollers, new strains have been developed to attack certain flies and mosquitos.

All in all, controlling pests with Organic Bacillus thuringiensis has become a marvelous tool for eliminating certain insect species from both the commercial and home garden. Its use helps reduce the amount of chemical insecticides in our environment and is harmless when eaten by beneficial insects and animals. Using Bt in the garden is perfectly safe in its application and ingestion by humans.

**Controlling Pests with Bacillus Thuringiensis**

Now that you have the answer to what is Bacillus thuringiensis, it probably sounds like Bt pest control is the only way to go, but there are a few things you should know about Bacillus thuringiensis products before you begin.

We use BT as a preventative on a weekly basis. Read the label for mixing instructions. Bt will only affect those insects that actually eat it, so spraying your crop after the larvae have made their way inside the vegetable will be of little use.

Bt is highly susceptible to degradation by sunlight, so the best time to spray your garden is early morning or evening. Most of these products adhere to the foliage for less than a week following application and the period shortens with rain or overhead watering.

Bt pest control products have a shorter shelf life than most chemical insecticides and should be stored in a cool, dark place. It’s best to buy no more than can be used in a single season.

If your garden is bothered by any of the susceptible insects, Bt pest control might be something to consider. Controlling pests with Bacillus thuringiensis can be an effective and environmentally friendly way to treat your garden. Knowing about what Bacillus thuringiensis is and how and when it should be used is the key to its success.