Fire ants can be controlled in home vegetable gardens. This publication should help you find fire ant control products that are legal to use in the home vegetable garden setting. For more information on controlling fire ants in vegetable gardens, see the recorded webinar "You Have Fire Ants Where?" at https://learn.extension.org/events/841, part of the eXtension Don’t Bug Me Webinar Series.

The following fire ant bait products are currently approved for use in the home vegetable garden:

- **Extinguish Professional Fire Ant Bait** (S-methoprene) can be used on cropland and vegetable plots. This bait contains an insect growth regulator that will keep any new fire ants from developing in the colony. Existing fire ants will die in 4-8 weeks. It is available only in 25 lb bags, which would treat 17-25 acres, so you may have to split a bag with some friends.

- **Baits containing the active ingredient spinosad** (Ferti-lome Come and Get It!, and various other trade names) kill all the ants that ingest some of the bait. These baits work in 2-4 weeks.

- **Esteem Ant Bait** (pyriproxyfen) can be used on many vegetable and fruit crops. It is a bait containing an insect growth regulator that works in 4-6 weeks.
Certain contact insecticides can be used for individual mound treatments for fire ant control in home vegetable gardens. These insecticides will kill ants that come into contact with the treatment in a matter of days. But the colony may need to be retreated if the queen escapes the treatment. I recently found the following products on the shelves of retail stores in Alabama. Products may differ in other states. Other products exist but I only listed the ones I found in my survey:

- KGRO Garden Dust (permethrin)
- Monterey Vegetable Garden Soil Insecticide (bifenthrin)
- Monterey Garden Insect Spray (spinosad) OMRI approved
- Ferti-lome Borer, Bagworm, Leaf Miner, and Tent Caterpillar Spray (spinosad)
- Green Light Many Purpose Dust (deltamethrin)

I will mention one other active ingredient that you may be able to find on the internet: orange oil, sold as Orange Avenger, can be used as an individual mound treatment in vegetable gardens.

You can also apply baits or other products around but not inside the home vegetable garden to reduce the overall fire ant population. Make sure that the pesticide you choose has fire ant control in the surrounding site listed on the label. For example, if the surrounding area is a lawn, then lawns need to be listed as a use site on the pesticide label.

Check the labels for the various products to make sure they can be used in home vegetable gardens. **Read and follow the directions.**

More information on fire ants can be found at [www.extension.org/fire+ants](http://www.extension.org/fire+ants).

Publication ANR-175-A, 2014 Fire Ant Control Materials for Alabama Homeowners, [https://store.aces.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=13505](https://store.aces.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=13505) provides information on products that can be used on home lawns.

Use pesticides according to the directions on the label. Follow all directions, precautions, and restrictions that are listed. Do not use pesticides on plants that are not listed on the label. The pesticides in this publication are recommended only if they are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries. Trade names are used only to give specific information. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System does not endorse or guarantee any product and does not recommend one product instead of another that might be similar.