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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Flea Beetles"...Information from Victory Garden Headquarters of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Have you ever, when you're out in the garden, seen little dark-colored insects? When you shake the plant they're on...or disturb them...they jump away like fleas? If you've seen them in your garden this year, you'd better get busy. Because those little bugs are flea beetles. And their chief delight seems to be gnawing holes through leaves. Which, it goes without saying, is very bad indeed for the plants.

The garden specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture tell us the flea beetle is one of the early bugs to attack a garden. It goes for young seedlings as they come up and for plants you've just set out. Radishes, cabbages, turnips, tomatoes, potatoes, eggplants and beets all seem to tickle its palate. Most of the time, flea beetles stay on the upperside of the leaf to eat. But that's not always the case. They sometimes eat from both sides. And when they've finished a plant is likely to look as if somebody's been sticking pins through each leaf.

If you haven't seen any signs of flea beetles in your garden so far, keep a sharp lookout for them. Because they attack in hords. And you'll want to get to work on them before they get to work on your garden.

What can you do to fight the flea beetle? Well...it's simple. Flea beetles don't like dust on their greenery. So all you have to do is dust your plants. You can use a rotenone dust mixture, or bordeau mixture, or hydrated lime or even talcum powder. Or you can spray with rotenone spray mixture or bordeau mixture.

If you want to know how to make any of these mixtures, get in touch with your local victory garden leader or your county agriculture agent. Either will be glad to help you.

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