

Gardening Question and Answer

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Q. We have an orange tree where its stems and even leaves are covered with powdery white material. We also can see some round dark colored patterns on the foliage. Is it fungus and scale insects? How do we treat it?

A. Yes, it sounds like you have citrus scale (dark circles) and also the scale we see on fruit trees like peaches (white powdery). Treat scale with dormant or horticultural oil now or in February. Apply it when the temperature is going to stay above 45 degrees for 48 hours. Follow label instructions.

Q. Do deer eat pansies? We have created a new flower bed and love the pansy blooms. Will Liquid Fence help keep them from being eaten?

A. Deer love pansies too. They seem to be one of their favorite foods! The Liquid Fence may protect the plants for a short time, but I wouldn't count on it. In some situations, calendulas and snapdragons seem to be left alone, especially if you spray Liquid Fence once per week for 6 weeks.

Q. Could you tell me at what cold temperatures I need to protect my red leaf lettuce, romaine lettuce, spinach and celery from freezing?

A. We generally don't protect the crops you list from cold temperatures. They are tolerant down to the low 20s.

Q. We planted a Monterey oak in July. We understand it will drop its leaves in February. Is it a problem if the leaves are turning red and some are dropping now?

A. This was a tough summer on newly planted trees, but your Monterey oak should be okay if you water it deeply every 2 or 3 weeks if it does not rain. Let the water soak in at the base. A newly planted and well-watered Monterey oak may have been in a growth mode when the freezes occurred. New leaves would be susceptible to the freeze without any long-term problem.