



Bulletin #2765, Common Problems in Container Gardens

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Adapted for Maine by Associate Extension Professor Kathryn Hopkins.

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Symptoms	Cause	Corrective measures
Plants tall, spindly, and unproductive	Insufficient light	Move the container to a location that receives more light.
	Excessive nitrogen	Reduce feeding frequency.
Plants yellowing from the bottom; poor color, lack vigor	Excessive water	Reduce watering frequency; check for good drainage.
	Low fertility	Increase fertility level of the base solution.
Plants wilt although sufficient water is present	Poor drainage and aeration	Use soil mix containing higher percentage organic matter; increase the number of holes for drainage.
Marginal burning of leaf edges	High salts	Leach container with tap water at regular intervals.
Plants stunted in growth; sickly, purplish color.	Low temperature	Relocate container to warmer area.
	Low phosphate	Increase phosphate level in base solution.
Holes in leaves; leaves distorted in shape	Insects	Hand-pick or use insecticidal spray.
Leaves with spots, dead, dried areas, or powdery or rusty areas.	Plant diseases	Remove diseased areas where observed. Call your University of Maine Cooperative Extension office or bring in a leaf for diagnosis.

Container gardening allows you to position plants for optimum light and warmth. Inspect vegetable plants regularly to forestall any developing problems.

Adapted with permission from Dr. Sam Cotner, *Vegetable Gardening in Containers*, Texas Cooperative Extension, The Texas A&M University System.

[VIDEO: Gardening in Limited Space Using Container Gardens, Part 1 \(YouTube\)](#).

[VIDEO: Gardening in Limited Space Using Container Gardens, Part 2 \(YouTube\)](#).

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