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Horticulture News

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While you may still be harvesting tomatoes and growing some fall garden crops it isn't too early to think about your vegetable garden next year. Have you been planting tomatoes in the same place year after year? Have you noticed problems with growing tomatoes?

Several steps can be taken to minimize disease problems in your garden next year. An important task is to clean up the garden in the fall. Carefully remove and destroy the infected plant debris. Many of the fungi and bacteria that cause plant diseases survive over the winter in the dead leaves, stems, and other plant parts that are left behind in the garden. The fungal spores and bacteria that survive in the garden then attack the new vegetable plants next spring.

Also, annually rotate the placement of vegetables in the garden. Disease problems often increase when the same crop, or crop in the same family, is planted in the same area for successive years. For crop rotation to be effective, gardeners should not plant vegetables belonging to the same plant family in the same location for a minimum of three years. Selecting vegetable varieties that are resistant to specific diseases can also be helpful.

Remember this quick vegetable gardening practice: Rotation, rotation, rotation!