

# URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

## Common pests and diseases: Parsnips

When growing vegetables, it is always exciting to care for the plant throughout its growing phase and then harvest it for delicious recipes later on, but one thing to watch out for is pests and diseases. Different plants are susceptible to different types of pests and diseases, and it is important to make yourself aware so you can keep a watchful eye and also take any preventative methods to keep your plants safe throughout their lifespan.

Parsnips can fall victim to several different pests and diseases.



[Parsnip seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

### Pests:

Some common pests affecting parsnips include aphids, the beet armyworm, the carrot rust fly and the cutworm.

Aphids will be soft-bodied insects usually showing up on the undersides of the leaves. They will be green or yellow in color. The aphids secrete a sticky substance which can cause mold. Knock the aphids off the leaves with a jet of water. Only use insecticides if the infestation is out of control.

The beet armyworm will cause singular or multiple closely group holes in the foliage of the plant. Apply *Bacillus thuringiensis* and encourage natural enemies.

The carrot rust fly will cause surface scarring of the plant's taproot by creating tunnels, which will be filled with a rust-colored mush. It also attacks carrots and celery. Use row covers to manage this insect and don't leave parsnips in the ground over winter.

The cutworm will cause the stems of young plants to be severed at the soil line. If the plant is older, there will be irregular holes eaten into the fruit. To prevent this insect, remove all crop residue after harvest and fit foil collars around the plant stems.

### Diseases:

Common diseases affecting parsnip plants include cavity spot, downy mildew, *Itersonilia* canker and more.

Cavity spot is a fungal disease that will cause the plant to develop sunken, gray lesions on the root and small vertical cracks. Flooded soils can increase the possibility of this fungus, and once it is developed, the fungus can exist in the soil for years. To prevent this disease, do not over fertilize and apply appropriate fungicides.

Downy mildew will cause the plant to develop yellow spots on the upper parts of the leaves, and there will be a fluffy white



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growth on the undersides of the leaves. The lesions will become darker over time. This disease is more likely to occur if there has been prolonged leaf wetness. To prevent this disease, don't overcrowd plants and practice crop rotation.

Itersonilia canker will cause the plant to develop brown necrotic lesions with green halos. It will usually emerge late in the growing season and to reduce it, cover the shoulders of the parsnip roots with soil throughout its growing season. Practice crop rotation and remove weeds, plow crop debris after harvest and plant in well-draining soils.

You can find parsnip seeds on our website at [ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)!



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