

Q. I'm a newbie gardener who really started researching and getting into gardening during Covid. I am completely in love with gardening but don't have the slightest clue as to what I am doing. I have several questions and am a tad bit overwhelmed at the moment. The most pressing question is how do I control fungus from spreading? I lost nearly everything last year to fungus. This year I changed how I water the garden (being careful not to water the leaves) and rotated all the crops from where I planted them last year. I believe that I am on the verge of another fungal disaster. I cut off the leaves of my potato, squash, and tomato plants with the brown spots and sprayed it with a copper fungicide. Is there anything else I can do? Thank you for your time! – K.J. in NE Tennessee

A. Hi K.J. your actions to control the leaf fungus are certainly in the right direction as far as the bad leaf removal. With the humidity being so high lately (and typically high all summer in this area), conditions are just right for fungus to start and take off. If you haven't tried this already, early morning watering will allow the leaves to dry out during the day. Another option is to bring a sample to the UT Extension office for a definitive identification on what is happening with specific recommendations to address the problem.

Thank you for submitting this question and welcome to the gardening community! – Your Friendly Master Gardener

Please submit your questions to UT Extension Master Gardeners on their website at [www.netmga.net](http://www.netmga.net). Click the link at the top of the page, "ASK A MASTER GARDENER" to send in your question. Questions that aren't answered in this column will receive a response from a Master Gardener to the contact information you provide.

Become a Master Gardener! University of Tennessee Extension is offering training classes starting August 5<sup>th</sup> at the UT-TSU Sullivan County Extension office. Space is limited. For more information call their office at 423-574-1919, email [abelche4@utk.edu](mailto:abelche4@utk.edu) or visit the Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener Association website at [www.netmga.net](http://www.netmga.net).

**Did you know** that you can access most of the same resources that Master Gardeners use to answer horticultural questions? Go to <https://www.uthort.com/educational-resources/> for educational resources from University of Tennessee Extension to find out more about how to effectively garden here in Tennessee.

*The Master Gardener Program is offered by the University of Tennessee Extension. The purpose of the Master Gardener program is to train people as horticultural-educated volunteers. These volunteers work in partnership with their counties to expand the educational outreach, providing home gardeners with researched-based information.*