Homemade Pesticides Meeting Kit



WHAT'S AT STAKE

Homemade pesticides might sound safer or more natural than store-bought ones, but they can still pose serious health and safety risks. Many of these DIY mixtures are made with strong household ingredients like bleach, vinegar, dish soap, or essential oils — and when mixed incorrectly, they can be harmful to your skin, eyes, lungs, or even your internal organs if accidentally swallowed or absorbed.

At work or at home, using a homemade pesticide without understanding the risks could mean causing chemical burns, triggering an allergic reaction, or creating toxic fumes that are dangerous to breathe. Even though these mixtures are often used with good intentions, improper handling or lack of safety knowledge can turn them into hidden hazards.

WHAT'S THE DANGER

Homemade pesticides may seem like a safer alternative, but they can be just as hazardous as commercial chemicals — especially when mixed without proper knowledge or safety precautions.

Toxic Reactions and Chemical Burns — Some DIY mixtures use ingredients like ammonia, vinegar, or essential oils. When combined improperly — like mixing vinegar with bleach — they can release toxic gases such as chlorine, which can burn your lungs and eyes. Essential oils in high concentrations can cause chemical burns or trigger severe allergic reactions, especially on sensitive skin.

Unlabeled and Improper Storage — Unlike commercial pesticides, homemade versions are rarely labeled or stored safely. This increases the risk of someone accidentally ingesting them, thinking it's a harmless cleaner or food product. Children and pets are especially at risk if these substances are left in unmarked containers.

False Sense of Safety

Because they're made from "everyday" items, people tend to skip personal protective equipment (PPE). But that false sense of safety can lead to eye injuries, skin damage, and long-term respiratory issues.

Other Dangers Include:

- No clear instructions or safety testing for DIY recipes

- Flammable ingredients near heat sources
- Cross-contamination with food surfaces or utensils

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Homemade pesticides might seem harmless, but they can still pose real dangers. If you're going to use them, it's important to treat them like any other chemical — with care and safety in mind.

Know What You're Mixing

Some common ingredients like vinegar, bleach, and ammonia can turn toxic when combined. Before making any homemade pesticide, research each ingredient carefully. Never mix chemicals unless you're 100% sure it's safe.

Example: If you're making a spray with vinegar, avoid adding bleach or hydrogen peroxide. These combinations can release dangerous fumes.

Understand What You're Using

Just because it's homemade doesn't mean it's harmless. Many DIY pesticides include ingredients like vinegar, dish soap, chili powder, essential oils, or even alcohol — all of which can irritate your skin, eyes, or lungs if used improperly. Before mixing anything, research the ingredients and understand their individual risks. Never assume a "natural" ingredient is safe to inhale, touch, or spray around others.

Act Smart When Mixing and Applying

Wear gloves, goggles, and a mask when preparing and applying homemade pesticides. Always mix in a well-ventilated area — ideally outdoors — and avoid contact with your skin or eyes. If you're using a sprayer or bottle, label it clearly with what's inside and the date you made it. Never reuse food containers, and keep mixtures away from children and pets.

- Never mix products unless you're sure it's safe — for example, combining vinegar and bleach creates toxic gas.
- Don't spray near food, water sources, or indoor ventilation systems.
- Always test a small area before applying to larger surfaces or plants.
- Wash your hands and any exposed skin thoroughly after use.
- Store homemade pesticides in sealed, clearly labeled containers and keep them away from heat or open flames.

Handle with the Right Gear

- Wear gloves and safety goggles when mixing or applying homemade sprays
- Use a mask or respirator if spraying in enclosed areas
- Always mix and use these products in a well-ventilated area

Label and Store Properly — Homemade does not mean harmless. If you're using your own pesticide blend:

- Label every container clearly with the name and ingredients
- Keep it away from children, pets, and food areas
- Store it in a sealed container, in a cool, dry place

How to Act if Something Goes Wrong — If a homemade pesticide gets in your eyes or on your skin, rinse immediately with clean water for at least 15 minutes. If you breathe in fumes and start coughing or feeling dizzy, move to fresh air right away. Call for

medical help if symptoms persist — and bring the ingredient list with you.

FINAL WORD

Homemade pesticides can feel like a safer or more natural choice, but they still come with real risks. Whether you're mixing ingredients in your garage or applying a spray around your worksite, it's important to treat these mixtures with the same caution you'd give any chemical.