

**WLVR**  
**Bethlehem, PA**  
**Quarterly Program Topic Report**  
**JULY 1st 2022 – SEPTEMBER 30th 2022**

**Issues:**

**AGRICULTURE/GARDENING**  
**MEDICINE/HEALTH/DIET**  
**GOVERNMENT**

**Programs:**

**AGRICULTURE/GARDENING**

Series Title: You Bet Your Garden  
Episode Number: 1197 (different episode weekly)  
Length: 60 Minutes  
Airdate: 7/22/2022 12:00:00 PM  
Service: WLVR  
Format: Instructional  
Segment Length: 00:7:00  
Topics: Gardening/HOME/FOOD

**The Dreaded Squash Vine Borer**

In this FRESH LOOK at an episode of YBYG, Mike McGrath details the 'Dreaded Squash Vine Borer' in the Question of the Week. Plus your 'Squishy Squashy' phone calls

**Squash Vine Borer Prevention**

Q. Sandy in Villas, NJ writes: "My yard is small, so I trellis my delicious Honeynut Squash. I also plant my own saved seeds instead of using purchased plants; and this makes it hard for me to implement your suggestions for using barriers to keep away squash vine borers. I read that planting winter squash after July 4th greatly reduces the chances of encountering the bugs, but not why. Is late planting a viable alternative to physical barriers? Do you have any other useful ideas? I love your show and always learn something new!"

A. Thanks Sandy! But I doubt your timing trick would work against this Evil Insect. According to the Pennsylvania State Extension System, the moth behind the problem overwinters in the soil in a larval state (technically a pupa), TYPICALLY emerges mid-to-late June and lays her eggs in July and August, although locale and weather can dramatically change those parameters. An unusually warm season could move the egg-laying into June in our area. And of course, they're up and out earlier the further South you garden. In the deep South they could even have more than one generation.

Let's go through their life cycle: Adults emerge from the soil, mate and then the female goes looking to deposit her eggs on squash family plants that have hollow stems, like zucchini and pumpkins, right at the soil line. They don't lay their eggs on squash with solid stems; but they will sometimes lay their eggs on the stems of cucumber plants. The female is a day flying insect that

looks a lot more like a weird wasp than any kind of moth, with translucent wings and an orange and black body. Pretty easy to spot, especially since they fly by day. Once she has sniffed out a good home for her children, she lays a cluster of eggs on the stem of the vine right where it enters the soil. In a week to ten days, the eggs hatch, teeny-tiny caterpillars emerge, immediately eat their way inside the vine, and once inside, feed and grow unseen. Soon the plant starts wilting. If your squash plants look like they need water but your other plants don't, get down and look for a hole at the base of the stem with lots of caterpillar poop around it. Slit the vine open with a single edge razor blade, or even better, use an X-Acto knife, a small, sharp and very precise artist's blade that's positioned at the end of a sturdy metal rod; great for this kind of close work.

When you reach the caterpillar inside; well...you got a sharp object in your hand, right? It's get even time! Then carefully heap soil around the damaged part of the vine; if you caught the problem quick enough, it may recover and keep growing. Experienced gardeners typically try and prevent the initial incursion by wrapping medical tape or aluminum foil around the base of their transplants so that the protective covering is half-underground and half above. Just think about those little caterpillars trying to bite their way through foil; a lovely image if ever there was one!

Now if Sandy were to start her own seeds indoors, she could likewise protect her plants at the time of installation. Otherwise, two good options would be to spray the growing vines at ground

level with a weekly dose of Bt, the old original organic caterpillar killer. As soon as the miniature munchers bite a vine sprayed with Bt, they'll lose the ability to eat and soon die. (And yes, Bt is safe for everything that is not a caterpillar chewing on your plants.) Although, in controlled studies, simply wiping that part of the plant with a clean cloth twice a week worked as well or better than any pesticide, chemical or organic, as the object was to simply wash the eggs off the vine before they could hatch. I'm thinking a high-powered water pistol would work well here. Kind of like a game of Whack A Mole with caterpillar eggs taking the place of the moles. Fun for the whole family!

I was also thinking of a version of a popular form of cutworm protection—take an empty soup can (with both ends removed) and push it a few inches into the soil around the sprout when it emerges, so the emerging leaves will cover the opening.

But no matter what you do, don't plant squash where you've had vine borer issues in the past. Because, if undetected, the borers inside your vines will grow fat and strong and drop onto the soil at the end of the season, where they will quickly burrow down to pupate and spend the winter, just waiting for Nature's cue to begin the process once again.

So interrupt the cycle! As soon a squash plant comes down with advanced symptoms, rip it out and destroy the nasties inside the vine before they can escape. Then cultivate the soil in that spot to uncover any pests you missed before they can get down deep. Hungry birds should be more than happy to finish up. You might also want to repeat that cultivation in the Spring, just before planting (when birds are extra hungry for such worm like treats!).

**MEDICINE/HEALTH/DIET**

Story Title: Mental health phone number available to Lehigh County residents  
Episode Number: 101  
Length: 5 Minutes  
Airdate: 09/27/22  
Service: WLVR  
Format: Interview format relevant local Medical Professionals

FROM WEBSITE:

ALLENTOWN, Pa. - A mental health helpline similar to the new national number 988 is available to Lehigh County residents.

The Warmline in Lehigh County is provided by Allentown-based Pinebrook Family Answers. The number is 610-820-8451.

Vicky Conte, Pinebrook's director of community-based mental health programs, said Warmline is a service for Lehigh County residents to use before they reach crisis mode.

"People can call to speak to someone on the other end of one line," Conte said. "If they are in crisis, then we refer them to crisis intervention.

"Generally, if they call us we can de-escalate through conversation, we can de-escalate people and if we determine that they're not in crisis, then we can continue to talk to them."

Warmline is a mental health line available to Lehigh County residents. Any adult can call for help with different mental health situations. The helpline is open 7 days a week from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. The number is 610-820-8451. The line is open to adults from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and operators will take calls from anyone English-speaking. Conte said funding for the phone number comes from the county.

Conte said a lot of people call because they are feeling lonely.

"There are a lot of individuals with mental health concerns with disabilities, who are seniors, who are isolated, especially after the pandemic," she said. "And once they become isolated, it becomes harder for them to go out and make friends and talk to people."

Warmline is a way for those people to have someone to talk to or a centralized place for other information they may need.

Similarly, the 988 nationwide phone number, started this summer, puts callers in touch with mental health professionals and connects to the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Brittany Sweeney

I'm WLVR's health and wellness reporter and also host "Living in the Lehigh Valley," PBS39's health and wellness show. I have covered health-related topics for Lehigh Valley Public Media, contributing to PBS39 and 91.3 WLVR, since 2018. Winning the 2020 Emmy Award for Video Journalist is something I am proud of accomplishing while working for Lehigh Valley Public Media. I grew up in Montgomery County and I'm passionate about telling compelling stories in my home state of Pennsylvania. I'm a graduate of Temple University (go Owls!) and spent most of my career working as an anchor and reporter for NBC affiliates in Northeast Pennsylvania and Ohio. When I'm not covering news around the Lehigh Valley, I can be found exploring the great outdoors with my family.

### **GOVERNMENT**

Series Title: Public hearings of the US House Select Committee on the January 6 Attack

Length: 180 MINUTES  
Airdate: 7/21/2022 8:00PM  
Service: WLVR  
Format: HEARING  
Segment Length: FULL DURATION

The House committee investigating the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol plans another hearing today Thursday, July 21, at 8PM ET. We expect the hearing to focus on former President Trump's inaction to stop the attack on the Capitol, filling in a 187-minute timeline when Trump was silent inside the White House on that day as the riot unfolded.

#### **LIVE SPECIAL COVERAGE:**

NPR News will offer anchored special coverage of this event on BOTH the All Things Considered subscription AND on the NPR Special Events Coverage/Breaking News Subscription (aka Breaking News Channel) in ContentDepot.

#### **ALL THINGS CONSIDERED LEAD-IN COVERAGE:**

All Things Considered in the 7:30 PM ET half-hour today Thursday, July 21, will be designed as a lead-in to the live Special Coverage of the hearing beginning at 8 PM ET. Beginning with the ATC "Return" at 7:30 PM ET, All Things Considered will focus on the January 6 hearings in all program segments in that half hour. The program will follow its usual clock. To facilitate your carriage of this coverage, NPR will provide All Things Considered on the Breaking News Channel beginning at 6 PM ET. NPR is making All Things Considered on that day available to all stations regardless of usual program schedule.