

## Tip of the Week - June 9, 2017



### Make a bunny buffet to save your lettuce!

It's a banner year for bunnies across much of the metro area. They love to nibble on almost all flowers and veggies and even lawns. If rabbits are in your yard, you've probably got a problem with them gobbling up veggies you would rather eat yourself!



While rabbits appear innocent and cute, they are voraciously hungry critters. If you've ever had your pansies or petunias disappear overnight, you're probably not their fan any longer!

#### There are three key lines of defense to deter rabbits:

- Providing food they will eat instead of your plants
- Targeted protection and
- Use of repellents

Food may be a best line of defense short of building a rabbit-proof fence around your entire yard. Unlike



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humans, if rabbits have their first choice, they will pick weeds to eat over our gardens! Weeds are dense and full of nutrients.

**If you give rabbits a healthy weed patch** by seeding an area with clover and alfalfa, they will have their own buffet and probably leave your veggies and flowers alone. If you're willing to tolerate some weeds and put up with rabbits living in your yard, you will go a long way to saving your plants!

**If you want to eat your snow peas and lettuce, you can also create barriers to protect plants with raised beds and/or fencing.** For veggies, build a raised bed high enough rabbits can't see over to the other side. They won't jump into a space they can't see. Or create a fence with chicken wire with holes less than 1 inch and install the fencing a few inches below the soil line.

**If you have pruning debris** that includes small branches and twigs, they can be placed around plants to weave a barrier. When the plants are mature enough not to be nibbled, the twig barrier can be removed.

**In terms of repellents,** there are a variety of DIY recipes on the internet and garden centers also sell a variety of repellents. Apply them at the end of the day because rabbits eat mostly at night. Repellents must be applied again after rain or after sprinklers run as water washes them off the plants.

**Certain plants act as repellents** - garlic, sage, catmint or rosemary, mint and any plant in the onion family. Mechanical repellents include imitation owls, snakes and pie tins that make noise. Be sure to move them around every 2 weeks so rabbits don't become accustomed to them.



**For more information,**  
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