

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

How to: Keep Pests Out of the Garden

There's nothing worse than when you have a plethora of bright, vibrant vegetables ready for harvest and some sort of pest eats your harvest or damages your plant.

There are a variety of different pests that can wreak havoc on your garden, and although certain chemicals or insecticides may help prevent that, some gardeners looking for a more organic solution may not opt for that. Instead, there are plenty of organic methods you can use to keep pests out of your garden in the first place.

Barriers:

Since there's a huge array of pests, big and small, there are different natural ways to deter each of them depending on their size. A somewhat expensive option may be to fence your plants and vegetables in, but this prevents you from seeing your harvest, and pests like deer may be able to easily leap over the barriers. Barriers are the most effective way to keep rabbits out of the garden, even if they don't work on deer.

Organic Prevention:

Depending on the pest you are trying to prevent from eating your harvest will determine which preventative measures you use. For deer, garlic spray and fish emulsion both keep the deer from stripping your plant. You can also make a homemade cocktail of capsaicin – which is the ingredient in peppers that makes them hot. A slightly more bizarre preventative method is to hang balls of human hair or soap around your plants.



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For smaller critters, like rabbits, one option gardeners may not immediately consider is placing fake snakes in the garden among your precious vegetables. This trick will scare the rabbits away, or you can also plant your highly-sought after plants near plants such as rhubarb, tomatoes or garlic, which rabbits typically steer clear of. Rabbits also dislike smells like capsaicin and vinegar, but these methods must be reapplied frequently, especially after rains.

For creatures like birds, the best way to keep them from eating your fruits and veggies is by applying netting around your plants.

Insect pests:

However, there are more pests than different types of animals. Insects can bypass fences and barriers, so there are different pathways to take to avoid their destructive habits when growing a garden. For slugs, place a saucer filled with beer out near the plants.



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You can also use copper strips or wire, as these produce an electrical charge that keeps the slugs from crossing the strip. For insects like tomato worms or cabbage loopers, the most effective way to get rid of them is to hand-pick them from your plants. For yellow jackets – which can feast on your fruits and also cause painful stings and blood poisoning, continuously pick your fruit as soon as it ripens. Keep trash cans tightly covered and fruit buckets empty and clean.

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