



## Keep Squirrels Away from Your Gardens

**Got squirrel problems? Some simple steps can help protect your vegetables and other plants from these critters.**

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Ground squirrels and chipmunks can be destructive when it comes to garden and landscape plants. Take the following steps to help prevent garden damage from these critters: Put out some cracked corn to provide an appealing, alternative food source.

Sacrificial gardens strategically planted to lure squirrels from the garden you wish to protect is another option.

Make your yard less appealing to them by eliminating any sources of water--such as leaky hoses and standing water--and incidental food, such as seed from a bird feeder or open dishes of dog food.

Install fencing to help protect garden beds and individual plants; a layer of wire mesh with one-half inch openings underneath and on top of the bed can also help.

Construct a perimeter fence and attach a band of 24 inch wide band of sheet metal to the top of the fence. The same method can be used to squirrel-proof, post-mounted bird feeders. In place of sheet metal, you can use a cylinder of aluminum stove or vent pipe at least two feet long to wrap around the post.

Spray burrows and plants being damaged with cayenne pepper or tabasco. Ready to use taste repellents containing capsaicin, the active ingredient in peppers, can be purchased at garden and hardware stores.

Squirrel-sized 'Have-a-Heart' cage traps can be purchased at hardware stores. The best baits to use for ground squirrels and chipmunks are peanut butter, oats, bacon, and apple slices. The cage trap should be placed near the entrance holes of burrows or other areas in the yard frequented by the animals.

Source: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the University of Arizona