



**This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/rabbits-on-the-garden>

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Rabbits in the garden?

K-State horticulture expert gives methods for effective protection

K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Rabbits are a common invader of home gardens, especially when plants flower in spring. Kansas State University horticulture expert Cynthia Domenghini said there are many common-sense ways to keep the hungry critters out.

“This time of year, rabbits gravitate to young vegetables and flowers,” Domenghini said. “But there are some vegetables that are rarely bothered, including potatoes, tomatoes, corn, squash, cucumbers and some peppers.”

Cynthia Domenghini said some methods for keeping rabbits away include:

Fencing

Fencing is often the quickest and easiest method of control. Domenghini recommended the fence be at least two feet tall with a fine mesh of one inch or less. Fencing support can be provided by a variety of products, including electric fence posts. However, fencing may not be a viable choice based on the desired appearance of the garden.

Floating Row Cover

Floating row cover is a light woven material that can be placed over plants yet still allows light, water and air to come through.

“Though most often used to promote early growth by keeping plants warmer than normal, it can also help protect young plants from insects and wildlife,” Domenghini said.

Repellants

Although commonly suggested for rabbit control, repellants must be re-applied frequently. Some can also be poisonous and cannot be used on plants intended for human consumption, Domenghini warned.

Trapping

Domenghini said live traps are usually recommended when the rabbit can be moved to a rural area several miles away from where they were initially caught.

“A number of baits can be used to entice the rabbit to enter the trap, including a tightly rolled cabbage leaf held together by a toothpick. However, rabbits often avoid baits if other attractive food is available.”

Sprinkler

A motion-activated sprinkler can be attached to a garden hose, releasing a short burst of water upon motion. Domenghini suggests picking a product that advertises it can protect at least 1000 square feet: “Such products are available from Contech, Orbit and Havahart,” she said.

Domenghini and her colleagues in K-State's Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources produce a weekly [Horticulture Newsletter](#) with tips for maintaining home landscapes and gardens. The newsletter is available to [view online](#) or can be delivered by email each week.

Interested persons can also send their garden and yard-related questions to Domenghini at cdom@ksu.edu, or contact your [local K-State Research and Extension office](#).

Brand names mentioned in this article are for identification purposes only and are not intended to be an endorsement of any product.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
K-State Horticulture Newsletter, <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

K-State Research and Extension local offices, <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/about/statewide-locations.html>

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