

Rodent Proof Your Garden

Protect your garden from rats, mice, and other potential pests!

Gardens make healthy foods more accessible for everyone! You can prevent rodents in your garden, by reducing their access to **food, water, and shelter**:

► Food:

- Use raised garden beds and hardware cloth (1/4 inch) to make it harder for rats to access your garden.
- Store seedlings inside or in tight lid containers before planting them outside.
- Consider picking produce earlier to limit dropped produce.

► Water:

- Monitor any drips or leaks from hoses and sprinkler systems.
- Improve drainage by adding organic matter (compost, shredded leaves) to soil so water does not settle.

► Shelter:

- Cut grass, weeds, and leaves 1-foot back from buildings and walls.
- Monitor and fill burrows (rat holes) with dry, loose soil or pea stone.



Resource: Brooklyn Botanic Garden; Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Do:

- Clean garden regularly and avoid clutter.
- Use plants that deter rats: peppermint, garlic, onion, citrus.



Don't:

- Leave produce and waste on the ground.
- Use clay or dense soils.



For **garden waste pickup**, contact the City of Somerville Department of Public Works. Call 311 (617-666-3311) to sign up for the **Residential Rodent Control Assistance Program**. Contact the City's Environmental Health Coordinator for **questions and tips**: aprivett@somervillema.gov.



Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

somervillema.gov/rodentsaway
for rat prevention tips and resources!



Rodent Proof Your Compost

Protect your garden from rats, mice, and other potential pests!

Composting is a great way to enrich soil and reduce rodent activity because it diverts foodscraps from waste and returns it to the soil. To prevent rodents in your compost, **reduce access to food, water, and shelter**:

► Food:

- Fresh food scraps should be buried at the bottom of the compost pile. Do not leave food scraps visible.
- Do not compost cooked foods, eggs, dairy, meat, fish, bones, fat, oils, or grease.

► Water:

- Cover irrigation pipes with hardware cloth (1/4 inch).
- Always keep dry compost amendments (malted barley, rock dust) on hand and mix with food scraps to manage wet material and odors.

► Shelter:

- Maintain at least 3ft of open space around each composting pile or bin. That's about an arms-length away.
- Poke and move compost piles regularly so rodents do not see an opportunity for burrowing holes for nests.

Rodent-Deterring Composting Systems



Tumblers, Bokashi Composts, Bin Systems with Lids

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