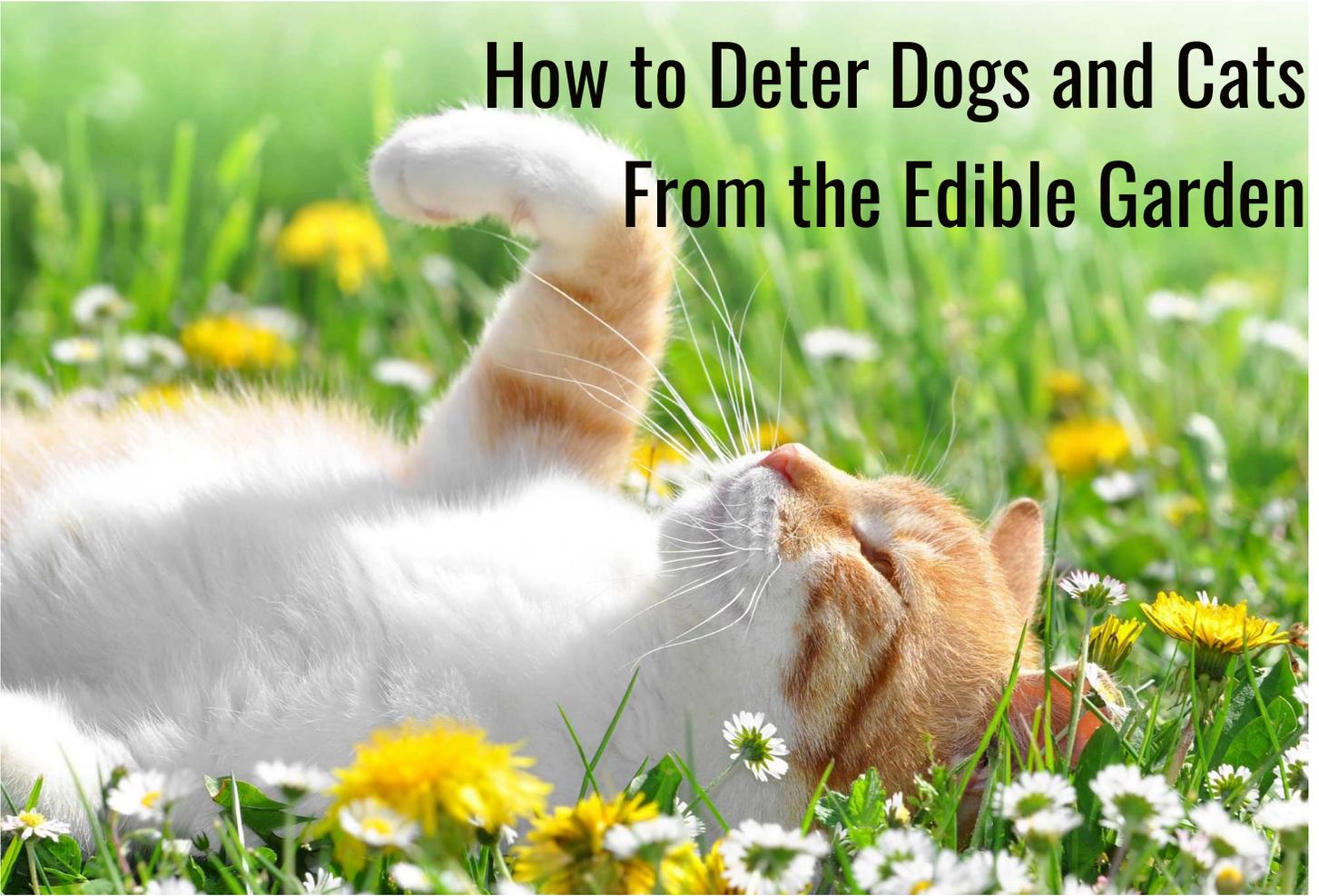


*How to Deter Cats
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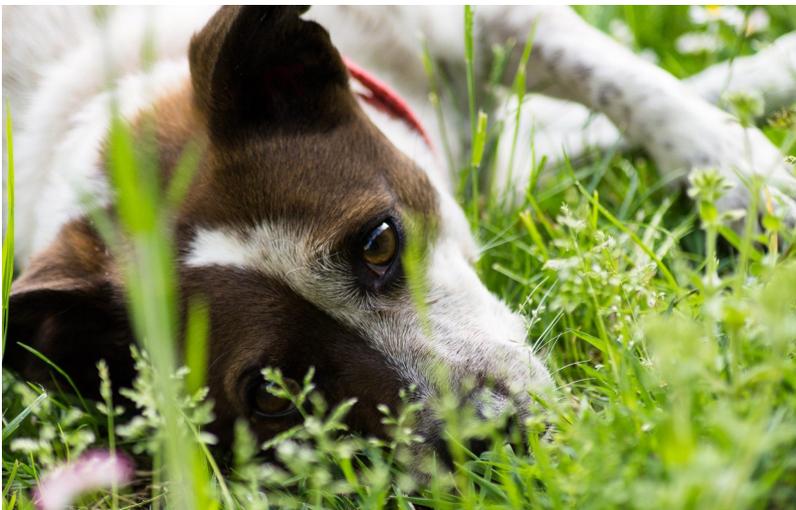
EDIBLE GARDEN

Ag *for* Life

How to Deter Dogs and Cats From the Edible Garden



Even if they are your beloved pets (and not neighbourhood strays or the animal next door), cats and dogs can be troublesome in the edible garden. They may dig up, roll in, chew on, and trample your plants, or worse – leave excrement near the food plants we intend to eat. Here are some humane, safe tips to keep Fido and Fluffy out of the garden and protect your plants.

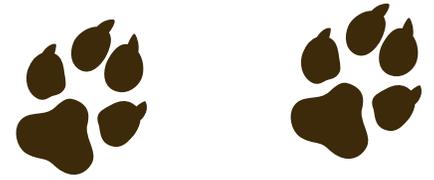




Dogs and cats have excellent senses of smell, and they find certain odours off-putting. Try spraying vinegar in the soil near the perimeter of the garden bed (don't let the vinegar hit any plants, as it may kill them). Citrus peels (oranges, lemons, grapefruit) are deeply disliked by cats, and many dogs will leave them alone as well, so you can try leaving them in strategic places near your garden as deterrents. (You can also purchase citrus sprays, which don't have the unsightly appearance of the peels). Remember to reapply sprays after it rains. Citrus peels will need to be replaced when the scent fades. Don't use red pepper flakes or any product containing capsicum (pepper) – it can harm cats and dogs if it gets in their eyes.

Fencing your garden is a good preventative measure for dogs. Make the fence high enough so that they cannot jump over it. You may need to sink the base of the fence a few inches into the soil to discourage diggers. (As a bonus, fencing can help keep deer and rabbits out of the garden as well). Cats can easily climb fences, but you can try topping the fence with bird deterrent spikes at regular intervals. Cats will not feel comfortable jumping up and walking over the uneven, poky surfaces.





Plants can also serve as fences around your vegetable garden – specifically prickly, thorny plants such as roses and barberries. Neither cats nor dogs will be impressed.

Motion-activated sprinklers are particularly effective at startling cats from the edible garden. Some dogs may be frightened of them as well (although others might be quite enthusiastic about playing in the water).





Cats will occasionally be deterred by the use of pine cones and twigs from trees as mulch between the rows of your garden bed, as they are persnickety and prefer to walk on even, soft surfaces. Dogs are not usually fazed by chunky, coarse mulches, however.

Inexpensive, plastic mats with spikes on one side can be tacked down to the soil between garden beds with landscape pegs, and may discourage cats from sticking around. Cats also do not like the scent of rue, lavender, or rosemary, so interplanting your edible garden with these fragrant herbs may be helpful.

Finally, ensure you clean up any excrement deposited by your pets (or strays that wander into your yard); you definitely don't want it near your edible plants. Furthermore, a clean garden may prevent the animals from doing further business in the same location.



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