



Slugs & Snails – limiting the damage

Damage by slugs and snails is annoying, especially when you have cared for and tended your plants, only to lose them to a mollusc buffet. This sheet has some ideas on how damage can be reduced. No single method is completely effective, but a combination may just give you the upper hand.

Whatever pest control methods you choose to use, please ensure that you do the **same thing** to all plants in the *Bees 'n Beans* experiment. Please note – we only encourage the use of organic or 'barrier' (physically difficult things to get over) pest control, so please check labels carefully.

Slug pellets

There are two readily available types of slug pellet, which contain different active chemicals.

1. Ferric (Iron) phosphate – often labelled as 'organic' pellets. Please follow the instructions on the container. These pellets do seem to get a mouldy coating after a while so it is worth looking out for this and swapping the mouldy pellets.
2. Metaldehyde – these can cause damage to other wildlife and **are not recommended for use as part of this project.**



Common varieties of slug pellets

Rough surfaces

Slugs and snails do not like rough surfaces, so adding grit or washed egg shells that have been crushed will help to deter them:

1. On the top of the to the soil surface.
2. Around the base of the pot.



Eggshells used to deter access to leaves

Slug tape

Copper containing tape that is placed around the outside of pots seems to work. There are two sorts, used in the same way:

1. Plain copper tape
2. Ridged surface tape



Copper tape on plant pots

It is easier to put the copper tape on to the pot before it is filled!

Raise up the plants

One of the easiest ways to reduce slug damage is to move the plants to somewhere it is harder for them to reach, away from hiding places and easy access.

- **Use a table** - Place the plant and watering tray onto a table or other higher surface can be helpful, but if the area is windy then this may not be a viable option. The legs of the table can also be protected with copper tape and slug pellets used on the table top, if you *really* want to hit them!



- **Build a bridge** - Pots can also be raised off the floor by the use of an upturned basket e.g. the sort that mushrooms come to the green grocer in. These have holes all over them and the surface is rough - so unpleasant to slugs and snails. The only position for the slugs or snails to get up to the plant is at the four corners. Slug pellets can also be placed under the tray.

Use a moat

Water will also act as a deterrent. Use the normal watering tray to hold the plant, and place a **bigger** tray in the final growing position. In this, put a support (e.g. bricks or an upturned basket as described above “under build a bridge”) to hold the plant and watering tray.

Fill bigger tray with water.



Tape, raised basket AND a moat!

Use of nematodes

Nematodes that will prey on the slugs can be purchased commercially, but these will not be routinely used as part of the protocol as they are expensive.

If participants wish to use them then all pots must be treated in the same way.

That's the advice we have for slugs / snails! There are probably other products on the market that are advertised for the job, but we don't have personal experience of any other methods, so do not feel able to recommend them. If you have particular success with any other methods, do let us know, and we'll pass on the tips.

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