



Hort Tips and News
Sandy Welches, Editor, MGV '05

Make tulip (and other) bulbs less tasty for squirrels

Forget the blood meal, chicken wire, human hair and pepper flakes. This Fine Gardening reader offers what she calls a “sure-fire, easy and seemingly permanent solution” for the problem of squirrels eating tulip (or other tasty) bulbs. Simply put a small dab of petroleum jelly on each bulb before you plant it, and the squirrels will show no interest in it. They must not like the smell, which apparently persists. Worth a try—eh?

**PETROLEUM
JELLY**



Move mulch by the bucket load—faster and easier

Rather than packing loose mulch into a garden cart and spreading it with a pitchfork or your hands, pack your mulch in 5-gallon buckets and use your cart/wheelbarrow to tote them to the shrubs and flower beds. Then pour the mulch directly in place. Gently shaking the buckets while pouring helps loosen the top-packed contents and minimizes large clumps. Slowly rotating the buckets allows reasonable control over placement and how much is spread.

You can tote multiple 5-gallon buckets at a time and carry at least two buckets once reaching the bed. Using this mulching method saves many trips to the mulch pile and cart.



Dressy and water-wise mulch for potted plants

When you are at the market, look for those colorful veggie sacks that hold onions and other produce. These bags make great mulch for your garden pots and baskets. They help retain moisture and add a touch of festive color to your garden.



Photo credits—jelly and buckets: www.fromuline.com
Produce bag—www.glacier.com

Source: Goldstein, Judith and Crawford, Bruce (2015, October). Reader's Tips. Fine Gardening, No 165, p. 14