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Animal damage - deer

Deer feeding injury creates a ragged, rather than a smooth cut because deer lack upper front teeth. Piles of dark brown deer pellets (feces) may also be present in the vicinity of deer feeding. Buck rubs, produced by male deer rubbing the velvet from their antlers, occur in fall just before mating season. Small trees may be pushed over or bark shredded off the trunk in strips by bucks polishing their antlers and marking their territory.

Management: Protect plants by covering them with chicken wire, hardware cloth or shade cloth during the winter and early spring. If deer are really hungry, repellents won't be very effective. Repellents may need to be applied frequently due to weathering. Electric fencing can be an effective deterrent, but it is expensive and local ordinances may prohibit its use.

A browse line develops to mark the height of deer feeding injury.

