

# Petition

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## Petition

Ban the feeding of deer, have an ongoing awareness program to that effect, an enforcement mechanism, and a penalty for non-compliance.

## Background

In April of 2010 the Town held a public forum on deer and urban hunting. The result of that effort is the Town's current webpage (<http://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/departments-services/police/information/deer-management-program>) entitled "Deer Management Program" which states:

"Please Don't Feed the Deer!"

"Feeding deer is harmful to the deer population and creates a nuisance for neighbors. Deer fed by humans are more prone to disease because of an unbalanced diet. Deer may return to the same source even when the feed is no longer available and often end up "visiting" neighboring property."

## Problems

Some homeowners feed deer to the extent that it is common to see 10 or more large deer feeding from bowls, as is the case with a nearby homeowner. This treatment of deer as pets is harmful to deer and the local environment.

Feeding deer habituates generations of them into remaining in a micro-environment of a few properties, exacerbating the browsing damage to both homeowner plantings as well as the natural environment. Even deer resistant plantings are damaged as high deer pressure on the environment leads to them sampling plants they normally would not browse. A deer fenced yard is no panacea; if they get in through a damaged fence they can very quickly decimate landscaping, as has happened in the past to our yard.

## Solutions

A ban on feeding deer would be consistent with the Town's stated position that it is harmful to deer and damaging to neighboring properties.

An awareness effort to the ban could be operated concurrently with other ongoing useful Town information that is in effect.

An enforcement mechanism through the police or Animal Control and a penalty for repeat offenders are important for deterrence. The current web-based admonition to "Please Don't Feed the Deer!" hasn't worked.