

# Waima To Laingholm Pest-Free Project: Possum Trapping Guide

## INTRODUCTION

The Timms trap is a simple, effective and low-cost tool for possum control. It is considered much more “humane” than poison because a poisoned animal can suffer pain for hours or even days while a Timms trap kills the possum almost instantly and without any chemicals. The other advantages are that it costs almost nothing to run and that you see exactly how many possums you’ve caught. This simple guide will help you get started with your new Timms trap and give you tips on how to make your possum trapping easy and effective.

## 1. LOCATION

**The trap should be strategically positioned on the edge of your lawn next to the bush in a spot that you can see from your window, deck, porch or driveway.**

*There are two advantages to this positioning. Firstly, it will only take 15 seconds per day to check if your trap has caught anything – by simply glancing out your window. Secondly, the possums have to walk on the ground when crossing the lawn so they won’t miss the trap.*

## 2. BAIT

**The best bait is 1cm thick round slice of carrot.**

**Puncture the centre of the carrot slice onto the bait holder stick, slide the carrot slice down and position it about 2cm before the stick bends.**

*Optional: you can sprinkle some cinnamon powder on the carrot slice and inside/around the trap to make it extra attractive. You could also scatter few pieces of carrot around the trap to get the possums used to the bait.*

*Note: apple and cinnamon is another bait option but apple is softer and deteriorates much quicker than a carrot so if you bait the trap with apple you will need to replace the bait more often.*

## 3. OPERATING THE TRAP

**Once the location is chosen and the trap is baited, position the trap on the ground and pin it down using the two metal pegs that come with the trap.**

**To set the trap simply pull the rope at the back until it stops.** (To unset the trap, lightly kick its back side.)

*Your Timms trap is now baited, secured and set.*

## 4. SAFETY

It is important to make sure that nobody puts their hand inside the trap when it is set. Please ensure the safety of your children.

Carrots and apples are not attractive to cats. But if you have concerns about cats you can leave the trap out unset for a week to allow any cats to investigate it safely and get bored with it.

If you have a dog that can access the trap, check whether it likes carrots (usually not). The possums are only active at night, so if you feel like it you could set your trap late in the evening and unset it in the morning.

## 5. CHECKING THE TRAP

Simply glance out of the window in the morning to see if there is a dead possum inside the trap. If there is no possum then you don't need to do anything.

The carrot bait needs replacing every 3-6 days in the summer and every 1-2 weeks in the winter.

## 6. POSSUM DISPOSAL

If the trap has caught a possum, congratulations, your positioning and baiting were a success!

Pull the cord to set the trap then remove the dead possum. You can then give the trap a light kick to unset it.

You can put the dead possum in the bush, lightly cover it with some leaf litter and it will decompose and compost back into the environment. The other alternative is to put it into a council rubbish bag.

*If you have other questions about possum trapping or disposal, contact us anytime via [WWW.W2L.NZ](http://WWW.W2L.NZ)*

## 7. REPORTING

**Whenever you catch a possum**, send a quick e-mail to [catch@w2l.nz](mailto:catch@w2l.nz) with your **trap number** (written on the trap), **date** of the catch and which **bait** you've used.

All individual e-mail reports are entered into a location-referenced computer system by our volunteers. This allows us to keep track of possum densities in different parts of our area, assess how well we are doing on a collective scale and to strategically plan our next steps.

## 8. LONG TERM STRATEGY

**Initial trapping:** keep setting the trap for two months and if at the end of two months you are still catching possums then keep going until you stop getting catches. The aim of this initial trapping round is to get rid of all the possums currently living on and around your property.

**Ongoing trapping:** until we get enough neighbours on board and ring-fence our project area with traps some possums from neighbouring properties will continue to re-invade your property.

**Trap for at least 1 month at the beginning of each season: trap in March, June, September and December.** Everyone involved in W2L pest-free project will trap during these months to collectively knock back possum numbers. You can then take a break for the remaining two months of the season if you wish.

## 9. CONNECTING PEST-FREE AREAS

**The best way to reduce and eventually eliminate re-invasion is to get your neighbours on board with this project.** Lead by being an example and tell your neighbours about how you've already got possums on your property under control and how it only takes 15 minutes per week during 4 months per year to make this positive contribution to our beautiful environment. By connecting possum-free properties we can make our entire area possum-free and protect our native trees and birds as well as our fruits and gardens.

**Our web site is [WWW.W2L.NZ](http://WWW.W2L.NZ)** – visit it for latest news, trapping information, additional traps, neighbour signup form and to get in touch with us about any questions or issues.

Welcome aboard and thank you for playing your part in looking after our natural environment!