

Lawn Weed Control Season is approaching

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I generally recommend that we hold off on fall lawn weed control until the last half of October. The simple reason for this is that we need the weather to cool down and some moisture to get the weeds sprouted and growing. Well, we've received enough rain and we've had enough cool weather that many of these seeds are starting to germinate which means that you can start treating lawns for weeds anytime now. We are going after all those weeds that grace our lawns with pretty yellow or blue or white or purple flowers come spring. So the weed and feed products would be perfect right now. In reality you can apply these from now clear up through early November. Most of the weeds we are trying to control won't go dormant until we consistently have temperatures down in the low 20s on a regular basis. Given the current forecasts, we're a ways off from that yet. As we get further into fall, the ground and the air will cool and visual evidence of herbicide activity on these weeds will become less and less. Both granular and liquid products will work equally good, just be sure to follow the directions. If using liquid formulations, treat when the temperature is above 50 degrees and the wind is under ten mph. If you have new grass we encourage you NOT to treat for weeds until the grass has been tall enough to be mowed twice, preferably three times. Those herbicides can damage small grass seedlings. If it looks like rain of more than a quarter inch is going to occur within the next 6 hours you will be better off to wait until you've got a clearer window of treatment! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.

End of garden season odds and ends

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Last week we talked about end of season tomatoes, well, mine are still blooming like crazy. Peppers are another garden crop that we can harvest late in the season and with peppers we have lots of options. Peppers of all kinds have a much longer storage life than tomatoes. In fact pepper can be diced and frozen on a cookie tray and then put into resealable plastic bags. Freezing them before you put them into a bag will make it easier to get them out later. Another trick that my mother used to do was to chop the green peppers up fairly fine, put them into ice cube trays, fill with water and then once they freeze, put these into a plastic bag. Then just grab a couple of pepper cubes out and throw into recipes. While the peppers will be mushy, the flavor is still there. These procedures work equally well for hot chiles as well as green peppers. Before you walk away from the garden this fall, and till it under, take the time to make sure you have a map of what you planted where. We don't like to plant tomatoes in the same spot year after year so it's helpful to rotate warm season and cool season crops. But by next spring, the past garden years can all run together. Make a quick map of what was where so when you are planning next year, you won't have garden befuddlement. Finally, if you haven't soil tested your garden for two years or more, pull a soil sample. You may want to hold off on tilling until you get the results back so if you need to add lime or sulfur for adjusting the soil pH, you can add that and then till it in. Now if you'll excuse me, I have garlic to plant! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

October Tree pests (twig girdlers, squirrels, hackberry psyllids)

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. October is the time of year that we can see a lot of things going on with trees. Fortunately, most of them may look bad, but not really an issue to the tree. If you have a hackberry tree near your house, this is the time of year that you will probably see the little black gnats swarming all over screens, or you if you are in the yard. These are hackberry psyllids and other than being a nuisance, they are not a threat. They don't bite but have prickly legs if they land on you. They emerge from the little bumps on the hackberry tree leaves. If you are getting a lot on your screens, spray them with aerosol bug sprays. They'll die if they get in the house and once cold weather arrives they will be gone. This is the time of year that we will often see small branches on the ground under trees. Three things are usually at fault here. Wind storms will break off small branches and usually result in a long tear at the end of the branch. If the branch looks like it's been bit off with a neat, clean angular cut, it's a squirrel. They bite off branch tips to make wintering nests. Leave these along and the squirrels will collect them and take them back up in the tree. If you keep picking them up, they'll just cut off more. And if the branches are under an elm tree and it looks like a little beaver chewed them off in a neatly done fashion, you have twig girdlers. They lay eggs on the branch end, chew it off and the wind distributes the eggs and the next generation around. No treatment is needed for any of these and in fact treatment isn't honestly beneficial. They all may be of concern to you, but not the tree! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.