

## Bagworms

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Bagworms are those cute little insects that love to feed on cedar trees and juniper shrubs (and about 200 other species) and carry a little mobile home around with them decorated with foliage from their host plant. Because of the way that cedars or junipers grow, they can not survive severe defoliation like deciduous plants can. Many homeowners are surprised when all of a sudden on mid summer day they notice that their plants are heavily infested. While they are convinced that this problem appeared overnight, they've been there for weeks already and simply escaped notice. Bagworms overwinter as eggs in one the bag of the mother bagworm. They are somewhat late hatches, having just started in late May and continuing to hatch on through mid June. IF you have bagworms on your shrubs last year or the year before, OR your neighbors had bagworms, I wouldn't wait to see if you have them this year, I'd just plan to treat. Bagworms are readily controlled with most standard garden insecticides IF they are treated early in the season when they are still small. If you wait until August, you'll have a lot more damage and control will be very difficult. The key to controlling bagworms is less about the choice of material and more about the application method. You have to use a hose end sprayer so you can apply a thorough soaking dripping off the foliage spray. Several products come with their own hose end sprayer, no mixing required. I'd apply my first application between June 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> this year and then repeat it 10 days to two weeks later, just to make sure! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.

## Little Barley

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The questions have started arriving about the grass showing up in lawns that is turning brown already and full of sharp pointy little seeds that get into your socks and in the pads of pet's feet. This is little barley and it is a growing problem. Little barley is what we call a winter annual plant. It starts growing in the fall, overwinters as a small plant and then grows rapidly in the spring, produces a seed head and then dies within the next few weeks. Regardless of what you do now, it has already produced seed and will be back next year. Little barley is one of those weeds that needs open space and bare soil to get started. It takes advantage of any opportunity that we give it. As with most of the other weeds, having a thick lawn that is mowed tall is the best defense against this stuff. And while we may do this in the best parts of the yard, there's still areas along driveways and sidewalks and streets that end up being hotspots, the grass doesn't thrive and there you go! About the only option right now for dealing with it is fire and for most of us, that's out of the questions because we live in town. In the short run we may have to resort to dealing with this stuff like you would annual bluegrass and that's to apply a crabgrass preventer around the 1<sup>st</sup> of September. Little barley is starting to be put on my and more crabgrass preventer's labels but you may want to check before applying. Remember it has to be activated with irrigation or rainfall before it will work. Do not apply a crabgrass preventer if you are also planning on reseeding this fall as it will cause failure. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Sidedressing flowers and gardens

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We could complain about the ten inches of rain we've gotten over the past month, but it wouldn't do any good. And it could be worse - I've got friends further east in the state that have gotten two feet of rain in the same period! All we can do is adjust and move on. We'll never be able to change mother nature so we just have to adjust, adapt, breathe in, breathe out and move on! One of the things that happens when we get a lot of rain is that nitrogen is lost out of the root zone. The actual way it happens requires a long explanation so let's just say that it either moves with the water in the soil out of the bottom of the root zone or changes to nitrogen gas and escapes into the atmosphere. What it means to you though is that to keep your flowers blooming abundantly or to keep your garden producing prolifically, you need to do something called sidedressing which is merely a light application of fertilizer right next to the plants. We often do this several times during a growing season for some of our heavy feeding vegetable crops like tomatoes. But given the heavy rains we've had, we probably need to side dress everything. Ideal products for side dressing are those that are just nitrogen. Look for fertilizers where the first number is the largest and the other two numbers are zeros or much lower. Nitrate of soda, 16-0-0, blood meal, 12-2-1 and ammonium sulfate, 21-0-0 are good side dress materials. If you can't find these, then just go ahead and use something like a 12-12-12. Apply about a half pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet, or 1/2 to 3/4 cup per 100.

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