

Peach Leaf Curl

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Peach leaf curl is an annual disease of peach and nectarine trees. Leaves are infected just about as soon as the buds break open in March or early April. The spores have been on those bud scales all winter and they're just waiting for the chance to infect those tender young leaves. At first you won't see a thing. In fact it may be weeks before you start to see funny little spots on the peach leaves that then start to develop into yellow or red distorted or puckered lesions on the leaves. Eventually the leaves fall off and die and new leaves emerge, unaffected by the disease. The problem is that if there's fruit on the tree, it's size and quality will be diminished. And year after year of this kind of defoliation will weaken the tree, impact fruit production and shorten the life of the tree. Leaf diseases of trees can not be cured, they can only be prevented. In the case of peach leaf curl, it is fairly easy to prevent with a dormant fungicide application now. Note that a dormant fungicide is NOT a dormant oil application. Two different treatments for two different issues. In the case of peach leaf curl you want to use a fungicide labeled for fruit trees that contains chlorothalonil. There are several homeowner products containing chlorothalonil labeled for fruit trees, let me know if you are having problems finding one. Mix with water according to label directions and then thoroughly spray the entire tree. I would encourage you to wait about two weeks and repeat the application to make sure that you get good thorough coverage. Spray on a day when the wind is calm and temps above 40. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.

Branches are still falling

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We had a fair amount of wind last week and I saw more branches that were broken in the ice storm coming down out of trees all over town.

This is going to continue for the next year. Take some time to look up in your trees for broken branches that are completely broken off, but hung up on other branches. I want you to locate them but not try to climb up in the tree, either branch by branch or with a ladder, to get them. If they are low and not too big, and you can reach them with a rake or shovel or stick, then fine, go ahead and dislodge them. If they are large broken branches, please call an arborist to come and get them down. But if they are way up there, just make note of them and make sure other family members know about them. So the next time that we have a really windy day, remember those branches just sort of floating around up there, and then stay out from underneath those trees.

Those branches can dislodge at anytime and even a smaller limb, dislodged and falling free, can do bodily harm! But in the meantime, the soil is starting to dry down a little bit so take some of these nice afternoons and get on out there with a rake and start the process of cleaning up all those little branches that broke out of the trees in those ice storms. It'll take a little bit of time but you can start to get them cleaned up. If you have a fireplace or wood stove put these sticks in some buckets - they make great kindling. Or, go ahead and put them in your trash dumpster. You don't have to put them all in one load, but you can get rid of them over the next couple of weeks.

This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

How Soon Can I start on the lawn???

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Okay, we're past the middle of February. Days are getting longer, temperatures, for the most part are getting warmer and spring fever is getting started in every homeowner that loves to work on their lawn. Every day that the temperatures inch above 50, the itch gets started to get out on the yard and do something! Okay, for starters, let's just let the lawnmower continue to sit for a few more weeks. This week I already talked about getting those small branches picked up that came down with the ice storm. I want all of these raked up before you put down crabgrass preventer in a few weeks. This is important because the crabgrass preventer creates a barrier and anything that you do to disturb the barrier after it get's established creates a break in the armor where crabgrass and other weeds can emerge. If you have areas of your lawn that you think you need to overseed, well the ground is still a little bit too cool for that. The one thing that you could do is fertilize and apply a broadleaf weed killer IF you didn't get that done last fall. You'll probably have better luck using a liquid herbicide this time of year and only spray if the temperature is above 50 degrees and going to be for several hours. Granular weed control products are going to work quite a bit slower in cooler temperatures. Granular fertilizer can be applied without any concerns at this time and they would probably be better applied now than in early spring. But for crabgrass control, you probably need to wait until about the first day of spring and then read the label first to make sure you use the right rate. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.