

Lawn Weed Control

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Late October and early November is the time that homeowners need to concentrate on getting their broadleaf weeds under control. At this time of year the weeds are small and easily controlled. In fact the weeds are often easily overlooked until they start to bloom in March and April. Unfortunately, by the time they start to bloom, they are much harder to control. Additionally, at this time of year, ornamental plants are going dormant and losing their leaves. The weed control products that we use on these weeds sometimes have vapor drift that can damage the leaves of ornamentals in the spring. So a fall treatment essentially has far less unintended collateral damage! You can apply treatments anytime until we start to regularly have temperatures into the low 20s. You can use either granular control products, like the weed and feed fertilizers, or you can use liquids that you spray over the top. Regardless of which one you use, read and follow the label directions. One thing to keep in mind though is that the products are going to work slower because of cooler temperatures. The herbicides work best when air temperatures are above 50 degrees because the weeds are actively growing then. Don't go out first thing in the morning unless the temperature is above 50. Avoid spraying when there's very much wind. For those do it yourselfers out there, straight 2,4-D is not going to get all of these weeds so make sure you use a combo product like Trimec, Weed-B-Gon, Weedout, etc. or if mixing your own, make sure you have 2,4-D plus dicamba and/or MCPP.

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

Bringing in plants

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. When it comes to my plants, I'm a gambler. I'll push plant hardiness zones. I'll push early and late seasons. I'll even try to push a shade plant into a little bit of sun or a sun plant into a little bit of shade. Maybe I'm not so much a gambler as I am a researcher. None the less, we need to be careful with those plants that we move in and out of the house when it gets to this time of year. I have a jasmine plant that's well over ten years old. This time of year I bring it in to my office where I have huge south windows and it blooms wonderfully through the winter - with a little encouragement. Then in the spring, usually early May, I take it back home. I have it in a sheltered location at my house and I know that it can handle some cool weather without having issues. If we have a light frost sneak in, I know that it's in an area very unlikely to get hurt. So I play a game. I watch the weather forecast, I watch my work schedule, I watch my home schedule and try to calculate how long I can wait to bring it in. As of today, I haven't move it yet! You need to know your plants. Some can take a little chilly weather, some really shouldn't get below 50 degrees. Prior to bringing it in you may want to trim it up a bit and definitely clean stuff off the top of the potting soil. If you've had issues with fungus gnats before you may even want to treat the soil for insects a week before bringing it in. I don't like to repot in the fall, I prefer to do that as I take it outdoors in the spring as you are moving it to a better growing environment at that time. Watch your watering and go easy on the fertilizer. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Home invading insects

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The days are getting shorter, the temperatures are getting cooler, though sometimes we do wonder, and many creatures know that their days are numbered if they don't find alternate living arrangements. Okay, maybe they don't KNOW, like we use the word, but that won't stop them from trying to get into our homes. I know that every year, no matter what I do, there will be a few crickets, a few spiders and a few who knows what else that get into my house. Many people want to know what to spray inside and outside their house to prevent this, but they fail to recognize that they can do far more with many non chemical practices to prevent the invasion. For keeping insects out of your house and warm air in your house, make sure that the house is well sealed up. Make sure that door jambs are where they should be and replace weather stripping if it is letting in light. If you can see light, air can easily pass through and so can many insects. Go around outside and inside your house and check anywhere that a utility wire or pipe enters your house and make sure that it is caulked and sealed. Make sure that screens fit tight so insects can't be creeping around them. Don't leave doors open. I have this habit of always looking down at the ground when I'm going in and out of a building. Part of it is so I don't trip, but also looking for things that will scurry past you unnoticed as you go through the door. Once you do all of these things, then you can consider treating the outside foundation of your house with insecticide as one last barrier, but this is the last thing you should do. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK,

I'm Chuck Otte.

Hardiness of Cool Season Veggies

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Many of our cool season vegetable crops, think of the things we plant first thing in the spring, are also well adapted to fall gardening too. I've been doing a little more fall gardening in recent years as it often works better with my crazy schedule! Obviously it's too late to plant much now, but for what we have in the ground, and for planning purposes for next year, what can we expect? The semi hardy plants are going to be things like beets, Chinese cabbage, collards, Irish potatoes, Bibb lettuce, mustard, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard and leaf lettuce. These can take light frosts, but as we drop below 30 we can start to see these things getting damaged. One way to help these survive those slightly colder freezes is by covering them with floating row covers. This meshy gauzy type fabric helps keep frost from forming on the leaves and helps trap some of the ground heat in keeping the plants from freezing. If there are light breezes you may need to weigh down the sides, but once it warms up the next morning you can roll it back and keep it handy for the next chilly night. Naturally, if there is a strong wind and cold temperatures, you are probably just out of luck and can look forward to the end of the season. But using these row covers can really lengthen the growing season! The hardest of the hardy crops are going to be cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, carrots, turnips and kale. Quite a few of all of these, both the half hardy and the hardy, can often be stored in the ground on in to December by using mulches to keep the ground from freezing!

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

Shutting down for the season

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Regardless of how long you try to push the lawn and garden season, at some point you'll just have to admit that the lawn and garden year is over. When that happens, the last thing you should do is just toss everything in the corner of the garage or the tool shed and decide you'll deal with it later. No, you really need to take your time and put tools and equipment into a winter dormancy that allows them to be ready for action first thing in the spring. This is a topic that I will continue to discuss in the coming weeks as more and more of the season shuts down. Every tool or piece of equipment that you use needs to be cleaned, repaired if necessary, sharpened - if it has a blade - and then bare metal parts treated with a little protective oil. You want those tools and that equipment to be ready to go next spring the first time you need it. All tools need to be cleaned with a wire brush. Get all that dirt cleaned off. If it's pruning shears, or anything like that, clean off all that dried up chlorophyll or other plant debris. You may need to use a little WD-40 or solvent to get all that gunk off there. Carefully clean off that cutting edge. Sharpen up the edges of those hoes and shovels. Touch up the blade of those pruning shears. Lubricate the joint on hand pruners, lopping shears and hedge pruners. Squirt some very lightweight oil on a rag or paper towel and go over all the bare metal surfaces. Sand wooden handles to remove rough spots and then apply a couple of coats of exterior grade polyurethane finish. Carefully put the tools away so they are ready to go again in a few months! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.