

### Fall Planting of Trees

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I like fall planting of trees. Instead of planting into cold, wet, low oxygen soils in March and April, you're planting into warm drier highly oxygenated soils. Even though trees appear to be going dormant right now, the roots are still actively growing. By planting now you'll get those root systems well settled in and working into the native soil before the root system goes dormant in another 6 to 8 weeks. A couple of things to keep in mind. If you are planting ball and burlap trees, remember to remove all that stuff that's around the root ball. Take off the wire cage, the burlap and certainly all the twine. That burlap does not rot away as fast as you may have believed that it does mainly because our soils tend to be drier and higher pH than soils further east. If you have a containerized tree, make sure that there aren't circling roots and cut them if you do. Circling roots become girdling roots and they shorten the life of the tree. Make sure that the tree is set so the crown is right at ground level. Planting it deeper inhibits proper root development, especially those so crucial root flares. Settle the soil, water it down but don't drown it. Mulch with a doughnut of mulch, not a volcano. Staking for many trees is not necessary but if you do stake it, remove staking after one year. Use a paper tree wrap and wrap the trunk from the ground to the first branches to protect against winter sunscald. While most trees can be fall planted, we discourage fall planting of fruit trees as well as redbuds, birch, willow, beech, magnolia, tulip poplar and willow, scarlet and black oaks. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Perennial Weed Control in the Fall

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, up until about the time that we start to have temperatures regularly into the low twenties or teens is a great time to treat for one of our stubbornest perennial weeds, field bindweed. Field bindweed is that vining plant that can be covered with white trumpet shaped flowers. Bindweed can be found growing in lawns, up the sides of fences, in gardens or landscape beds. It freezes back to the ground every fall and starts growing with a vengeance again in the spring. It is very frost tolerant and while many other things are slowly going dormant in October and November it is still growing and storing food reserves in it's massive root system which can be over 15 feet deep and extend out over 30 feet in a several year old plant. Because of this massive root system, it can take a couple of years to get it under control. In lawns routine broadleaf weed control in October is pretty effective at getting it under control. Any herbicide that contains quinclorac is going to be highly effective at controlling bindweed but be careful not to use grass clippings from treated areas to mulch in the gardens. Quinclorac has a long residual activity in grass clippings and can cause damage in gardens. If you have bindweed in your garden, clear out the remains of your vegetables and treat with glyphosate which is found in roundup, kleenup and several other products. Glyphosate has no residual soil activity so it won't affect next year's garden. Around landscape plants, try to carefully untangle the vines, pull them away from the plant and then treat them. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Controlling Poison Ivy in the fall

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. If you are sensitive to poison ivy it can impact you any month of the year. There is no safe time around it. The compound that does the nasty business is an oil that is very stable. The sap may go down in the fall and winter, but there are still oily residues if that stem breaks open. However, in the winter, when the leaves are gone, you do have a lower risk of being exposed to the sap and the oils. So if you need to remove it from areas of your landscape, it may be the time to go after it. Keep in mind that all we have around here is poison ivy. It may look like a vine, a free standing shrub or a ground cover, but it is all poison ivy - not poison oak or poison sumac. The form that is a ground cover is probably best treated with a foliar spray in the late spring so we can't do much about that now. But the vining form growing up a tree or the free standing shrub CAN be treated now. In both cases we are going to cut the plant off at the ground and treat it with a stump and brush killer or poison ivy killer that contains triclopyr. Do not let your friend give you some Tordon and use that. Tordon is very water soluble and can easily wash off the recently treated stump, into the soil where it will be taken up by roots of desirable plants. Triclopyr won't do that so is safer to use in landscape settings. Concentrated glyphosate can also be used for a cut surface treatment. When you are cutting down the vine or shrub, be careful. If you are using a saw don't inhale the sawdust and don't let it get inside your gloves or clothing. If you burn it after cutting, stay out of the smoke! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Tree and Shrub Pruning in the Fall

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. For decades, pruning of a lot of trees was highly encourage during the fall and early winter. I suspect that much of this was driven by the desire to minimize bleeding or sap flow. In the fall, sap is generally going down and there will be a lot less sap coming out of pruning cuts. But we've learned a lot more over the years. When a branch, even a small one, is cut off of a tree, the plant needs to seal off that area, a process we call compartmentalizing. It's designed to stop the spread of decay organisms within a plant. When a pruning cut is made in the fall, the tree is dormant and it won't be able to start the healing process until next spring - months away. So if we prune in the spring, there will be more sap bleeding, but that's okay. The tree can quickly start to seal off that pruning cut, compartmentalizing it on the inside and initiating callous tissue growth to seal it over on the outside. In the fall of the year it's okay to prune out dead branches or do some light pruning, which would be removing less than 10% of the plant. But heavy pruning really needs to wait until spring. Same holds for shrubs. DO NOT prune spring flowering shrubs now. Pruning now will reduce blooms next spring which is not what you want. Junipers can be pruned now but should be a fairly light pruning. Junipers, because of how they grow from the tips of the branches out, should be pruned lightly every year to keep their size in check. Too often homeowners wait too long, the plants get too big and pruning back to size becomes impossible. So you start over!

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## Garden Soil Testing in the Fall

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Some gardeners are quite fastidious. As the season winds down the plants come out of the garden and into the compost pile or the trash. When the last plants are out they get it tilled up and ready for the first crops of spring in early March. On the other extreme we have the walking gardeners. Those are the ones that decide enough is enough and just walk away from the garden. The last thing they may do is run the lawn mower over it, if they even do that. They'll get around to dealing with the garden next spring when they get the chance. The rest of us fall somewhere in between. But one thing that all gardeners should do is to collect a soil sample in the fall and bring it in to the Extension Office for testing. We mainly want to know what the soil pH is and what the phosphorus levels are, but we'll probably check it for nitrogen too. I like to see this done in the fall because if there is something that needs correcting, like an excessively high or low soil pH, we can start fixing the problem yet this fall. If you've been unhappy with the results of the garden let us know that as well and be specific. Although the problem is often NOT the soil but some other management issue, let's start with a soil test to be sure. It's easy to take a soil sample. Just go to a half dozen different places in your garden and with a trowel or a shovel dig up soil down 3 to 4 inches and put it in a bucket. If it's muddy, let it dry and break up the clods, then mix this soil all together. We want a good average representation. Then bring about a pint of soil to our office for testing. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.