

### Dead Head Peonies

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Many years the peonies are long gone by Memorial Day, but this year many were still in gorgeous bloom. In fact I still have some late buds opening up. But for the most part the peony bloom season is over. Which means that it's time to deadhead your peonies. Unless you want to try to collect seed and grow some peonies from seed you want to snip off those dead blossoms so the plant doesn't waste time making seeds. Clip the blossom stem back to the first leaves. Do not go in and mow them off at this time though. It's important to leave the foliage on for much of the summer for the plant to be able to build up energy reserves and new buds for next year. As you clip evaluate plant floriferousness. Few flower buds are usually an indication that the plants are too deep and need to be reset this fall. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Prune Lilacs

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The lilacs were absolutely gorgeous this year. The flowers are all gone and especially in the old fashioned lilacs, they are busy growing seeds right now. You don't need your lilacs to produce seeds though, in fact, it's a waste of energy and can inhibit floral bud production later in the season. Right now is a good time to get out and prune those lilacs. Start by trimming out old or dead growth or stems that have gotten out of hand. Then go in and try to get most of the seed pods clipped off. If the plant is about the size you want, or even smaller than you want, then just cut the stems right below where the flowers were. If the plant is too big, cut it back to the size you want. Lilacs will bloom next year on new growth that is produced this year. Buds form in August so trim back now to get that new growth! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Treat for Bagworms

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We are past the 10<sup>th</sup> of June so it's bagworm treatment time. Bagworms have and are hatching. They aren't going to be super noticeable right now, in fact unless you are looking close, you can miss them. But if you or your neighbors had bagworms last year, you will want to treat this year! I recommend treating twice, once now and then in about two weeks to make sure you didn't miss any or if there was a late hatch. If you wait until late July when the bags are big and noticeable, they will be hard to control. You can use the organic control spinosad or any of the standard lawn and garden insecticides with good success IF you apply with a hose end sprayer. You have to really soak down the plant to get good control. Many of the products do come in their own hose end sprayer which works very well! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Why Fruit Drops

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This is the time of year when home orchardists often notice that fruit, that appeared to have set on their fruit trees, is dropping off, often quite heavily. This is normal and it is okay. Most fruit trees, other than cherries, tend to set far more fruit than they can truly support. A tree has a certain ability to produce a certain weight of fruit and you can choose to have a lot of small fruit or fewer but bigger fruit. Some trees we may still have to do some thinning. Fruit trees will always start to grow fruit unless the blooms were frozen. As time goes on some of the fruit will drop off due to stress or often because it wasn't properly or completely pollinated. I don't have enough time to explain properly pollinated here. Even the wrong pesticide applied at the wrong time can cause fruit drop, but fruit drop is normal. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Leaf Diseases

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I had a friend send me a photo of a leaf off their pear tree recently. The poor leaf looked like it had a bad case of the measles. In recent years we have seen a growing amount of rust disease on ornamental pears so just add this to the list of reasons NOT to plant ornamental pears! Pears are closely related to apples. Apples, at least some cultivars are susceptible to a disease called cedar apple rust. This disease is one of several diseases including cedar hawthorne rust and cedar quince rust. They all go between various relatives of apples and cedar trees. The problem is that unless a fungicide is applied prior to the disease sporulating on the cedar or juniper, there's nothing you can do. So don't spray now for it. The good news is that it isn't a fatal disease and the pear tree will likely put out new leaves. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.