

Gardening with Chuck Programs for September 2 - 8, 2019

LABOR DAY - NO PROGRAM

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent.

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Fall Gardening

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. People hear of fall gardening and they think that they need to start planting in the fall. But really, fall gardening refers to when the harvest occurs. Most of our fall garden crops are going to be planted in July or early August. Once we get to September we only have a handful of crops to be planted. The leaf crops of lettuce and spinach are both short season enough and cold tolerant enough that you can plant them clear up to the third week of September. Additionally, radishes and turnips can be planted up through late September as well. Radishes have a very short time frame from planting to harvest - basically about 4 or 5 weeks. Turnips take longer but are very cold tolerant. You can plant turnips now and harvest deep into fall if the ground doesn't freeze. Then there's garlic planting, but that's another program! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Redbud Leaffolder

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. If you have a redbud tree I want you to go out and look at it when you get the chance. Look and see if there are some leaves turning brown which upon closer inspection have been folded over and then stuck down. Start opening those folded leaves up. More than likely you'll eventually find a black and white striped caterpillar that will zoom, lickety split, right off the leaf. This is the redbud leaffolder and a nearly annual late summer pest on redbud trees. That caterpillar feeds on the leaf surfaces inside that little folded pocket. It will then pupate inside their hatching out as a little black moth with white wing spots in the spring. While it can look unsightly there's no way to control this insect this late in the season. Sprays in July, before the leaf folding occurs works, but the damage really isn't that bad. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Lawn Seeding Rates

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. When it comes to planting grass seed, more is not always better. If you are planting a new fescue lawn plan on 6 to 8 pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet. Bluegrass seed is smaller so you only need 2 to 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet. If you are overseeding to thicken up a thin lawn, cut those rates in half. Planting too much grass seed looks really good for the first couple of weeks. But then those tiny little grass plants start to compete with each other for water and food and even sunlight and pretty soon that thick carpet of green becomes a dense carpet of dead grass. All you really need is about one plant per square inch to have a good thick yard. More than that just doesn't work well. Follow these rates, do a good job of getting the seed into the soil, water it up and mow it at 3 inches and you'll be happy. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Watering New Lawns

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. When it comes to newly seeded lawns I want you to take all the information we normally tell you about watering lawns and throw it out the window. We seed lawn grasses shallow, as in about a quarter of an inch deep. When the seed starts to germinate it needs to stay damp until it gets a crown developed or it will die. Most homeowners will water when they plant grass seed. You will normally need to water daily if not twice a day. You don't have to water deeply at first because the seed is so shallow. Once you start to see a lot of green shoots coming up you'll need to back off to once a day watering but a little deeper as those little roots stretch down. Then go to every second day and every third day and so on. If it rains, you can skip that day and maybe the next. But keep watering at least weekly. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.