

Dividing Daylilies

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Daylilies are well adapted to Kansas growing conditions but under good growing conditions they need to be divided regularly to stay vigorous. While necessary this isn't for the faint of heart. You basically need to dig up each daylily clump with a spade and then put spading forks (a.k.a. potato forks) into it back to back and pull it apart and break it down to a clump about the size of a medium sized head of cauliflower or toss it on the lawn, get a garden hose to jet all the soil out and then start rolling it around until it separates into pieces. If it hasn't been too long since you planted your daylilies, you may be able to leave part of the clump in the soil and just carefully cleave off new starts from the edge. Take your divided pieces, replant them about 24 inches apart at the same depth, backfill, and water. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Before You Give Up on the Garden

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It's been a long hot summer and we aren't even to mid-August yet. More than a few gardeners are likely ready to just toss in the towel, pull out the hoses and mow it all down. If you are to that point, may I suggest a couple of things to do first? Make a map of this year's garden. What did you plant where. Do this so that you can rotate your crops around. Tomatoes especially benefit when not planted year after year in the same location. Secondly, rather than just mowing everything off, pull all the garden plants out first and toss them into a burn pile or the trash. Diseases and even insects can overwinter in old garden debris. Get it out of the garden. If you do mow it down after all of this, plan to till it this fall and maybe even spray it with glyphosate to keep weeds knocked down and not producing more seed! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Grow A Salad Garden

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We are well into August and the growing season is slipping away rapidly. If you aren't totally tired of gardening yet there is still time to plant a salad garden. A salad garden is best described as vegetables that you'd put in a salad, duh! Specifically I'm talking about lettuce, spinach, radishes and turnips. All four of these are short enough season crops with enough cold tolerance that they can be planted clear into mid September with normal expectations that you can harvest well into late October and possibly even early November. Just a couple of things to keep in mind. Plant the seeds just a little bit deeper than you would in the spring. The soils are warm and dry out quickly so you need a little bit more soil cushion. Fertilize about three weeks after emergence. Keep the water on these crops if it doesn't rain. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Harvesting Pears

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Pears, and I mean European pears, not Asian pears, are kind of an odd fruit. Most people's opinion of what a pear should taste like comes down to a Bartlett pear. Most European pears need to be picked early and not allowed to ripen on the tree. Pears ripen from the inside out, so will tend to turn mushy and develop hard grit cells in the flesh if allowed to ripen on the tree. It can be a bit of a trick to know when to harvest pears but a few things to look for include: when the lenticels, which are breathing pores on the skin of the fruit turn from a white or greenish to brown it's getting close. When the fruit parts easily from the branch when it is lifted and twisted is a good sign and the best sign is to simply see if it has developed the characteristic smell and taste. Then harvest and let it ripen inside. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

When Are Apples Ripe?

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. If you have apple trees there is the eternal question of when to pick the apples. We tend to get anxious and even I was looking at my apple trees the other day wondering how much longer. There are some keys to look for. Flesh color will change from light green to white. Cut a thin slice out of the fruit and hold it up to the light to check it. Color of seeds for most cultivars will change from light green to brown as the fruit matures. The blossom or calyx end changes from green to a light yellow. Days from flowering can be a clue as well but I find this unreliable and very weather dependent. Ultimately it all comes down to flavor. Slice into an apple and see if it tastes sweet and mature. If it isn't mature yet it will taste starchy. Wind falls may be stored for a while and allowed to ripen. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.