No Program - 4th of July

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

I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Start Looking for Japanese Beetles

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I can confirm that Japanese beetles are now emerging and getting very active. Japanese beetles are a medium sized beetle with coppery and green coloration on their back and little white spots on their sides. These very pretty beetles are very destructive and love to eat things like roses and grapes and various other plants we like to grow in our gardens. They are very active in the morning, and somewhat gregarious. Some gardeners go out with a small bucket of soapy water each morning and knock the beetles into the bucket and drown them. Others will use appropriate lawn or garden insecticides and spray them down every few days or week or so. Most insecticides labeled for lawns and gardens will work well, just follow label directions. The good news is that they are only around for 4 to 6 weeks! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Don't Use Japanese Beetle Traps

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Yesterday we talked about Japanese beetles getting active and some possible steps you can take to deal with them. One of the things NOT to do is to get a Japanese beetle trap and put in your yard. Japanese beetle traps work by using two scent lures to attract beetles to the trap where they are supposed to fall inside the trap never to get out. What I will tell you is that these traps work well. Or rather, the scent lures work VERY well. As Japanese beetles are attracted to the trap they release more pheromones resulting in what's best called a Japanese beetle orgy. Sadly many of the beetles attracted never get in the trap and you wind up with more beetles in your yard than you would have had to begin with and they are all going to eat your plants. So don't fall into the trap trap and work on other control methods! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Blossom End Rot

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I'll bet we've all known a young man who's feet seemed to grow faster than the rest of him and for a while he was all awkward and a bit clumsy before his growth got all balanced out. Well, the same thing can happen with plants and specifically tomatoes. In their case though, it's the tops that are outgrowing the roots and we see the biggest issue with this as the first tomatoes are setting on and starting to ripen. Then all of sudden there's that dark spot on the bottom of the tomato that ruins the tomato. Blossom end rot is caused by a physiological calcium deficiency. While there's plenty of calcium in the soil, the plant is growing too fast and can't get enough calcium moved to the fruit. It's a temporary thing and while you may cry with every tomato that you toss, the roots will catch up and things will be OK! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Pinching Mums

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Mums are well known for producing long lasting late summer or autumnal flowers. A well managed bed of mums is an absolute glory to behold in September and also provides a wealth of pollen and nectar for pollinators. The thing that you need to remember is that mums will bloom way earlier in the year if the home gardener isn't proactive. Ideally when the new year's growth was about 6 inches tall you snipped the top inch off. The whole idea is by pinching off the growth, the mum plants bush out and become fuller. Then, about the 4th of July you do it again. Even if you didn't pinch back your mums earlier, get it done real soon. If you wait much longer then the by the time new buds are formed and start to bloom you may not get to enjoy the flowers very long. Do it now for more enjoyment this fall! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.