

Gardening with Chuck Programs for March 21 - 27, 2022

Frost Damage on Fruit Trees

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. A couple of weeks ago it got pretty cold for March down into the single digits. For those of us who have fruit trees, temperatures like that in March can make us shudder. Often it can be days to weeks later before we know the impact of temperatures like this. We do have some pretty good guides though on what to expect based on stage of bud development. I went out the next day and looked at my apple and pear trees and saw that there really had not been much bud swelling which means that they had been holding dormant pretty tightly. I do not expect to have had much if any freeze damage. But in a couple more weeks it'll be another story. If you had peaches, apricots or cherries you may have experienced some damage. If the buds were swollen but not yet green you likely had 20 to 30% bud damage. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

HPAI and Home Poultry Flocks

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. If you have home poultry flocks you need to be aware that the highly pathogenic avian influenza is in the state. This viral disease can wipe out home flocks, large numbers of wild birds, especially waterfowl, and decimate commercial production facilities. At this point it's a very low risk to humans but those with poultry need to be aware of it and be alert for birds in their flocks that aren't acting right. Time does not allow for details on what to look for or what to do. You want to try to keep your flock separated from wild birds, especially wild waterfowl and I'd also keep visitors away from the flock also. You can search the internet for avian flu in Kansas and the first link that comes up will likely take you to the Kansas Department of Ag which is where you want to be to get your information! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Clean Up Asparagus Beds

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. If you haven't yet, it's time to get your asparagus beds cleaned off. If your bed is like mine there haven't seen any spears push above ground yet. If that's the case then you can hurry and spray the area with glyphosate to kill any weeds that are there and turning green. Then you can follow that up with an application of a vegetable garden weed preventer that has asparagus on it's label. This will help keep early season weeds down. You can also first hoe the bed or very shallowly rototill it to deal with any weeds and then put down your weed preventer. There may also be an urge for gardeners to fertilize their asparagus now but that won't help anything other than the weeds. Wait until the end of the harvest season and fertilize it well then. This is also a good time to get new or additional crowns planted. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Cedar Trees Aren't Dying

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This is the time of year that I usually expect a few phone calls about why the cedar trees are dying. In most cases, cedar trees are not dying. What folks are seeing is an annual process called blooming! Cedar trees have male and female trees. The male trees release the pollen that drifts in the wind to the female trees where their flowers are pollinated and that's how the little blue seed berries are formed. Right now the male trees are rapidly developing blossoms on the ends of the branches. These blossom buds are quite brown giving them the look of dying foliage. The female blossoms are very small and easily overlooked other than those trees are still very green. The males are starting to release clouds of pollen after which the little brown flower buds will fall off and the trees will be green again! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Vegetable Garden Calendar

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We all know the old saying that a picture's worth a thousand words and sometimes when that picture is a simple chart it may be worth more than a thousand words. Gardeners know that you don't plant all the garden crops at the same time. But even for me it's easy to get confused on whether you plant carrots at the same time as beets or melons at the same time as cucumbers. We have an awesome bulletin called the Vegetable Garden Planting guide which is also on K-States website. One page has a chart telling you how much production to expect per 10' of row. Another chart details days to first harvest, how much is needed per 10' of row as well as row spacing. But the best page of this bulletin is a chart that shows months of the year and then when to plant and when to harvest. Pick up a copy of this bulletin soon! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

