

## Gardening with Chuck Programs for May 2 - 8, 2022

### Prepare Lawns for Drought

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Homeowners, especially those with lawn irrigation systems, often set their lawns up for drought failure. Or perhaps it's the people that set up the sprinkler systems for lawns set the lawn up for drought failure. First of all, I don't care how many minutes your sprinkler system runs. I want to know how much water it applies. Go out and get a cheap stick in the ground rain gauge or even get some tuna cans and clean them out and put those around the yard. We need to be applying at least ½ inch of water per watering and preferably a full inch. Watering a little bit every day only wets the top inch or two and that's where the roots will develop and where those roots will dry out fast in a hot dry summer. Here's the trick though, you may have to run that system 2, 3, or even 4 times in a day to get 1 inch applied! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Delay Planting of Winter Squash and Pumpkins

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. If you look at our vegetable garden planting guide you'll see that you can start planting squash anytime now. Here's a pro-tip though, don't plant your winter squash or your jack-o-lantern or pie pumpkins until the latter half of June. Most of these cultivars only need about 80 to 110 days to reach maturity. That means harvest will be around that first fall frost AND Halloween. You don't have to worry quite so much about where to store those winter squash in the late summer heat. More importantly, by planting that late, you're going to avoid the first generation of squash bugs and probably have an easier time controlling that second generation as well. You'll still likely have to treat for squash bugs, you just won't have to treat as much. But remember to keep those squash fertilized and well watered! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Blackspot on Roses

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Blackspot disease on roses is the most common foliar disease of roses. Some newer shrub roses like the popular Knock-out roses do have good resistant to blackspot, but many hybrid teas and miniature roses are still highly susceptible. The key to keeping blackspot issues down is to keep the leaves dry. When it doesn't rain, that's an easy thing to do. When it's not raining, you need to water and you want to water at the base of the plant. Once blackspot gets started on roses though you need to either put up with rose bushes with no leaves, or start spraying aggressively on a 10 day schedule. There are many good rose fungicides out there. Before every treatment remove infected leaves from the plant, pick up any leaves that have fallen off and toss them away and spray tops and bottoms of all leaves. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Too Early for Bagworms

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We've had plenty of opportunity the past five years to see how damaging bagworms can become if left untreated on evergreens like cedars, junipers and arborvitae. The last couple of years the bagworms haven't seemed nearly as bad, but all it takes is one female bagworm bag filled with 500 to 1,000 eggs and you can have a mess again. If you've had a problem in the past, keep an eye out for them. But not yet. Bagworms won't start hatching until late May into early June. Spraying now, even looking for them now won't accomplish a thing. But start keeping a wary eye out for them starting June 1. A good clue is if foliage suddenly goes off color, even a little. The bags will be tiny but they will be easy to see. But spraying before they hatch out won't do you any good! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Start Planting Tomatoes and Peppers

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Peppers and especially tomatoes are temperature wimps. In the spring they do not like cold weather and especially cold soil. But slowly the soil temperatures have been warming up and I think we are finally to the point that we can start transplanting them into the garden. If your garden gets late afternoon shade though, you may want to hold off even a few more days. Daytime highs aren't all that high yet and nighttime lows are cooling things off at night. The problem with setting tomatoes out too early is that excessive chilling will shock them back into vegetative mode which will slow down how soon they will be blooming and setting fruit. When you are setting them out remember to set the plants at the same depth, firm, not pack, the soil around the roots and then water them down. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.