

This weed is taking over my yard!

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I wish I had a dollar for every weed brought in to me this spring because it was taking over somebody's yard. So far the leading contenders are black medic, wild lettuce, little barley and knotweed. Later on this summer it will be crabgrass, foxtail, puncturevine and spurge. Contrary to what most homeowners think, very few weeds actually out compete grass and take over a yard. Weeds move in because of lack of competition from the turf. The lack of competition occurs because of weather and/or mis-management by the homeowner. Last summer put a real hit on even heavily watered yards. When yards go dormant for extended periods we often find that we lose some cover and even after green up we have more bare soil. OR, my real gripe, are the folks that constantly mow the yard as low as they can and then complain that they've got weeds everywhere. They've created all that bare space by mowing low so they have no one to blame but themselves. Long term, mow tall and thicken up the yard. Short term, control the weeds. BUT you need to use great caution when treating weeds in lawns in the summer. The herbicides that kill broadleaf weeds tend to release vapors when temperatures are over 80 degrees. These vapors can curl leaves of sensitive plants including tomatoes, roses and redbuds. Spray when it is below 80, preferably below 70, and calm winds. If you have grassy weeds starting to come in, then you need to use a product that also kills crabgrass and remember that with grasses, they need to be small, and then smaller the better!

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## Early summer vegetable gardening

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Last week's weather aside. We are still coming up on the first official day of summer. Garden crops are trying to catch up and really starting to grow fast. Early season crops are into their full stride. The hot weather last week really kicked my garlic around and I imagine I'll be harvesting it around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Potatoes are probably blooming for most gardeners. If you are harvesting new potatoes, dig the entire plant and let it air dry for a few hours before picking the new potatoes off the roots. New potatoes are just small, walnut sized immature potatoes and the skin will slip very easily. You should only dig as many potatoes as you will use at one time as they do not store well at all. Speaking of potatoes, late June and most of July is when we plant our second round of potatoes for the fall garden. If you've never tried a fall garden, give it a try this year. Gardens are going to need watering once or twice a week now. If mother nature doesn't supply water then get the hoses out and start watering. A good way to reduce water use in the garden is through the use of mulch. Wheat straw is the queen of garden mulches but any long stemmed hay can work. You can use grass clippings, but let it dry down before putting it in the garden or you'll develop a thick thatchy mat that water will not penetrate. Mulching works well after side dressing and hilling up crops like potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and sweet corn. Mulching also helps keep down the weeds that will be coming on strong once you start watering the garden. And if you have squash, start spraying for squash bugs! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Bagworms, Part II

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Let's carry on with last week's discussion of bagworms. Hatching is occurring and probably will continue for another 10 to 14 days. If you treated anytime before about June 10<sup>th</sup>, it was probably a waste of time. You need to be treating in the next ten days and then two weeks after the first treatment give a second treatment. Then continue to monitor through the year because if a neighbor has a heavy bagworm infestation, some may crawl or parachute on to your junipers as well. If you want to go with a natural control then bacillus thuringiensis or Bt or spinosad are the products to use. Bt needs to be applied early, heavy and often to be effective. Spinosad is probably my preference because it can be used to control even large bagworms and is less effected by ultraviolet light than Bt is. For conventional control we have many different products. Some of my preferred insecticides are cyfluthrin, lambda-cyhalothrin and bifenthrin. Since bagworms are inside a little protective bag, we have to depend as much on ingestion as contact for them to take up the insecticide. I can not over-emphasize the importance of applying any of these products to the point of runoff or dripping off the foliage. For that purpose you have to use a hose end sprayer. Most modern day lawn and garden insecticides come with their own hose end sprayer and I strongly recommend going that route. You can still by hose end sprayers that allow you to fill with your concentrate, but just forget about spraying bagworms with a 1 or 2 gallon pump up sprayer - it just isn't going to work! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.