

### Spraying or over-spraying?

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. There are a few instances where regular spraying with insecticides or fungicides is required. Commercial production of high value fruits and vegetables comes to mind. Because of the ongoing issues of trying to produce these crops, managers will simply treat regularly because they know that there will be issues otherwise. Home orchards usually have to use this approach too. But sometimes, well meaning homeowners go a little bit overboard on this approach. For starters, make sure that you are not reapplying the product more often than is allowed by the label. If the label says to retreat in 10 to 14 days, don't be out there every week treating. Always make sure that the product you are using is what is needed to control the problem. I've seen way too many things applied for the wrong reason. I've seen home gardeners with serious disease problems using an insecticide to try to control it. Not going to happen folks. Make sure that you have a reason to spray. I haven't treated my hybrid tea roses in over ten years for insects or diseases. All those that got black spot I got rid of. And I don't worry about aphids because the natural controls will catch up and take care of them. IF you have a problem and are applying a control product, make sure you are using it correctly. Black spot of roses can infect either the top or the bottom of the leaves so if you are only spraying fungicide over the TOP of the leaf, you aren't going to have good control - you need to spray both surfaces. Finally, leave perfection at the gate. You don't need to have perfect leaves on your plants! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Bagworms

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. If you have junipers or cedars and especially if you have had bagworm issues in the past, then it's the season to prepare to start treating for bagworms. Bagworms are those devious pests of junipers that have a little mobile home that they live in that they decorate with foliage from the host plant. While they will feed on over 200 species of plants they are really only a problem on junipers, cedars and occasionally spruce trees. Other species have the ability to easily generate new foliage to replace what was eaten.

Bagworms started hatching around the 17<sup>th</sup> of May this year and will continue to hatch until about the 20<sup>th</sup> of June. We are probably at about the peak of hatching, but there is still no need to be in too big of a hurry. My general rule of thumb is to spray on June 10<sup>th</sup> and again on the 25<sup>th</sup>. The first spray gets everything that's hatched up to that point and the second spray gets anything missed plus any late hatchers. Many lawn and garden chemicals will kill bagworms. One of the better current products is also an organic product known as spinosad - which looks like it should be pronounced spin-o-sad. Regardless of what product you use, the way you apply it is what is important. You need to apply a lot of material to make sure that you get good penetration of the foliage and thorough coverage of the little bagworms. If you want to try to get by with one treatment, which I do not recommend, then wait until the first of July but make sure you perform a very thorough soaking spray. But I would strongly encourage you to make two application!

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## Mulching tomatoes

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We're finally getting into some good weather for growing tomatoes. Warm days, nights in the 60s, tomatoes should be growing like crazy about now! I'm doing all of my tomatoes in containers and I will just mention that I already do have a few tomatoes setting on. One of the things that we recommend is that you mulch tomatoes.

Mulch can do a lot of very good things, but one thing that can happen is that if you plant early and mulch too soon, the mulch will actually keep the ground cool which is contrary to good tomato growth. If you mulched before now and feel that your tomatoes aren't growing very well, you may want to remove the mulch for about a week and let the ground warm up. We mulch to help control weeds and to reduce moisture loss from the ground. By moderating soil temperature and soil moisture fluctuations we can reduce that early season curse known as blossom end rot. Choice of mulching material is critical also. Hay and straw mulches are popular, but be aware that you may be bringing in weed seeds when you do this. Some people like to use grass clippings and that is fine if a few points are followed. If you have used any herbicides on the lawn, you will not want to use the grass clippings for the first three times you mow after treatment. And if you used the crabgrass killer quinclorac you don't want to use them at all for the entire year. Also, let the clippings dry down before using. Putting down wet clippings will allow the clippings to get moldy and form a thick thatch layer that water will never penetrate!

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