

Crabgrass Control

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. When I drive down the street I tend to see things differently than normal people driving down the same street. You probably see lawns of green grass. I saw lawns with lots of weedy grass issues starting to show up. I'm not in the least bit surprised by this. Lawns have been hit hard the past few years by heat and drought. So lawns have been a little thin with open areas in many lawns. Then we get all that rain in May and June. Not only does this provide a lot of opportunity for things like crabgrass and foxtail to get started, the heavy rain also causes crabgrass control to have gaps or break down quicker than normal. Fortunately we do have post emerge warm season grass controls, and they are usually called crabgrass killers. There are actually two different products out there and they both work pretty well if you understand their limitations. The most commonly found active ingredient is the chemical quinclorac. This is a very good product especially on smaller crabgrass, less than three leaves. And it doesn't count if you've been mowing them off. This is often found in combination with broadleaf weed killers; products like Weed-B-Gon Max plus Crabgrass control. Since these have broad leaf weed killer also use them with caution around landscape plants, flower beds and vegetable gardens. The other active ingredient is fenoxaprop-p-ethyl. I've only found this in Bayer Advanced Crabgrass Killer for lawns and also in Bayer's Bermudagrass Killer. This product will work even on large crabgrass and is less risky to use around broadleaf plants. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Scorch

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I'd been waiting and the calls started coming in last week. Most of the time they were on trees like maples or flowering pears, but sometimes on other species that were just a year or two old. The symptoms were always the same which when you have the same issue showing up on several different species you can usually rule out disease very quickly. The symptoms started a couple of weeks ago, coincidentally about when the weather turned off hot and dry. The same thing kept showing up. Edges of leaves would turn blackish brown and it would continue to creep across the leaf sometimes knocking the leaves off the trees. This is a condition known as scorch. It happens because for one reason or another, the tree can not move enough water to the leaf fast enough to make up for the water being lost through a normal process known as evapotranspiration. Here's the thing to keep in mind. Often the tree can be sitting in perfect soil moisture conditions and it will still happen. If it's a new tree, it often doesn't have a root system well enough developed to take up enough water to supply all the leaves. This is especially true this year when the cool wet conditions early encouraged trees to put on a lot of leaves. In some cases though, as in maples, the trees just can't shut down transpiration enough to keep up. We had a pretty good rain last week. If we don't get an inch of rain a week, slowly water the tree with a low running open hose. Don't depend on sprinkler systems for lawns to do the work though. Most of the time these aren't applying enough. Use a hose! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

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Proper Watering Technique

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Summertime watering of lawns, flowers, vegetable gardens even trees and shrubs is an art form based on science and too many homeowners get it all wrong! Most homeowners apply water faster than soils can absorb it and then they don't apply enough for it to sink deep enough to do much good. Most lawn sprinkler systems run too often yet only soak up the top inch or two of soil. Lawn sprinklers should apply about one half inch of rain at a time to soak up 3 to 4 inches and then only run about twice a week. Flower beds, and vegetable gardens should not be watered with sprinklers. Use soaker hoses or an open hose running slow down a row. Many leaf diseases on garden plants, like tomatoes, are made worse by constantly wet foliage. Keep the leaves dry through proper plant spacing and keeping water on the ground and you can reduce disease issues. The same is very true for roses. Trees and shrubs, especially mature ones, generally don't need water unless we are in an extended drought. When you do water trees and shrubs, don't use the root feeder type products - you'll generally push the water right below the majority of the roots. Use an open hose running slow under the drip line of the tree and let it run for hours. Get a long screwdriver and push it into the ground under the tree. If you can push a 12 inch long screwdriver easily all the way in, there's good moisture in the critical root zone. The one exception are spruce trees. If you go three weeks, especially in summer, with little or not rain, give the root zone a day or two of soaking! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

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