

Brown Patch in Lawns

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Many people are quick to want to claim that they have some disease that is killing their lawn or making it look less attractive or something. Many lawn companies are also quick to want to sell you a lawn fungicide treatment, most of the time which isn't needed. We do have one fairly common disease, especially on tall fescue, which is called brown patch. Under severe cases brown patch can actually kill plants, but most of the time it just knocks the leaves off the top. There are a lot of fungicide applications made, but often these are being made when the real problem is the management of the turf. Brown patch is so common because the disease spores are everywhere. If you go outside in the morning, the lawn is covered with dew and the temperatures are in the high 60s or especially in the 70s, and this happens every morning for a week or so, you probably will see brown patch. It lives wet leaf surfaces and warm overnight temperatures. The number one way to reduce the risk of brown patch is to minimize how long leaves stay wet. We seldom see severe brown patch in non-irrigated lawns. Severe cases are always in irrigated lawns. Do not water in the evening, water in the early morning hours. Set those sprinklers to come on at 3 in the morning and turn off by 9 or 10 in the morning. Then only water 2 days a week or every three days. Reduce the amount of total fertilizer your lawn gets and especially don't apply summer fertilization if having a brown patch problem. Remember, fungicides can't cure a disease, they can only stop it from spreading! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Fall Gardens

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As we move out of July and into August it is time to gear up for fall gardening. Many gardeners don't try fall gardening and I think they are missing

the boat! A lot of things can be planted in late July and early August. If you hurry you can still get potatoes planted but I mean hurry as in right now! Then hope we don't have an early frost!

Other garden crops you can get in the ground still include snap beans, cabbage, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower and beets. Later on in August you can also plant lettuce, radish, spinach and turnips.

You are probably noting that many of these are the same as our early season veggie crops. These are the things that thrive in cooler weather which works out just well as we move into the cooler and shortening days of September and early October. Many of these are also fairly frost tolerant and if you want to experiment with floating row covers you can take things like spinach and lettuce clear into November most autumns. A few things to keep in mind with fall gardens. You are planting them in the heat of the summer so the plants will probably come up quick and so will the weeds. Weed control is critical. You are also putting up tender young foliage right into the buggiest time of the summer so be ready to treat for insect pests. While we've had some nice weather of late, warmer days are coming back and soil moisture can go away quickly leaving small plants with limited root systems gasping for water. Keep them well watered during the early stages of development and side dress with fertilizer 2 to 3 weeks after emergence! This has

been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Lawn 101

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Many people want a Mercedes class lawn yet they are only willing to spend a Ford or Chevy budget on it. If you want a lawn to look like a golf course, then you've got to spend the time and money on it and THEN manage it with the understanding of what the grass plant needs. The biggest mistake that homeowners make with their lawns, other than unrealistic expectations, is mowing the grass too short. Mowing grass too short leads to patchy lawns that get invaded by all the wrong weeds and grasses. Mowing the lawn too short results in reduced root systems that aren't capable of keeping a lawn going during short periods of heat and drought. Many people think that weeds are the biggest challenge a lawn faces when in reality, the weeds are merely an indicator of other issues, often a lawn that is being mowed too short. Then we can get into watering issues and fertilizing issues which can lead to disease and insect issues. The answer to all of these is not just pouring on more water and more weed killer, insecticide and fungicide. It's learning to understand your lawn and what it wants and needs. I'm presenting a one night short course for all of you that really want to learn more about taking care of your lawn and getting it through the challenges of Kansas weather. Lawn 101 will be held at 7 p.m. on September 2nd, a Wednesday evening, at the 4-H/Sr. Citizens Building on Spring Valley Road. Yes, that's a month away yet and you'll hear me talking about it regularly to make sure I get you there. There's no charge but please call the office at 238-4161 to register! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.