

Weed Control in Strawberries

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. With the rain and the temperatures, strawberries should be growing like crazy right now. With the rain and the temperatures, weeds in strawberry plantings should be growing like crazy right now. Strawberries, unlike many other fruit crops, are very limited on herbicides that we can use on them. Pre-emerge products that will keep weeds from germinating and growing, simply aren't registered for the home gardeners to use. Commercial growers have a few options, but they have to be applied just as the mulch is removed and prior to blooming. If you have broadleaf weeds starting to grow in your strawberries, your only option is to carefully hoe them out or pull them. One of the things that we strive for with strawberries is to have a dense enough stand with enough leaves that weeds have trouble getting started. Sometimes we can take our straw mulch off and leave a light amount of mulch and this can help keep weed pressure down. Once harvest is over, for June bearing varieties, we do have some options for herbicides to control broadleaf weeds. If, on the other hand, you have some grassy weeds getting started, you do have some options other than mechanical removal. The herbicide Poast, active ingredient sethoxydim, can be used to control grassy weeds. Both now and then later in the season if crabgrass starts to move in. You can apply Poast up to seven days before harvest, but then have to stop until harvest is over. Poast is found in several formulations including Over the Top II, Hi-Yield Grass Killer and Monterey Grass Getter. Be sure to follow directions! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Wild Violet Control 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. We were walking with a friend in the woods recently and we were all enjoying the wild violets that were blooming. While wild violets out in the woods may be a delight to find, some homeowners take offense to finding them growing and blooming in their lawn. Wild violets like to have some shade so they are often going to be found in parts of the lawn that are maybe not growing quite as aggressively as those areas in full sun. Wild violets are a perennial plant and to be right honest, they are not very easy to control. You can forget standard weed control products like Weed-B-Gon or Trimec, those that use the standard MCP, Dicamba and 2,4-D combos. They may control young plants and curl the leaves on older plants, but that's about it. In fact, if you have a lot of wild violets, it's probably indicating that there is a management or cultural issue at stake here and we may need to discuss the bigger picture instead of just this one weed. But if you are insistent on controlling wild violets, you need to bring in the heavy hitter known as triclopyr. Triclopyr is found in products like Turflon Extra or Weed-B-Gon Chickweed, Clover and Oxalis killer. Not regular Weed-B-Gon mind you, it has to also say Chickweed, Clover and Oxalis in the name. I would spot treat only where the violets are growing, Mix it up according to label directions, make sure that it is quite calm and above 50 degrees but below 90, and really below 80. These products are labeled for bluegrass and fescue but not Bermudagrass. Some of the products may be labeled for buffalo-grass. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Roundup for Lawns

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. A few weeks ago I was watching television and a commercial came on for a product and I literally winced. The product being advertised was Roundup for Lawns. I might have even said out loud, you've got to be kidding. For decades, Roundup was the brand name of a herbicide called glyphosate. Glyphosate is a fairly efficient non-selective herbicide. If it's applied to a green growing plant, the plant dies. If you spray traditional Roundup on your lawn, you will have dead grass. Now, Roundup for Lawns is a totally different herbicide. It is a combination of four different herbicides that can and will provide very broad spectrum control of several hundred lawn weeds. Similar herbicide mixes in fact already are on the market and used all the time. My problem isn't with the actual herbicide, it's with the name. This is a recipe for disaster. Somewhere, this year, someone is going to buy or open a bottle of traditional Roundup, mix it up and spray it on their lawn, and part or all of their lawn will then die. There will be no recourse against the manufacturer because there will be warning on the label telling the end consumer that they are responsible for mixing and using the herbicide according to label directions. Which won't change the fact that the lawn is dead. So this comes down to you, the consumer. You DO have a responsibility to read the label of whatever product you are using. Read it carefully and follow all the directions. Know why you are using what you are using. And if you spray traditional Roundup and your lawn dies, don't call me! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Ash/Lilac Borer

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As long as there have been European settlers in Kansas, we have had ash trees and we have dealt with an insect pest called the ash/lilac borer. It rarely killed trees but could damage them. Then this foreign invader called the Emerald Ash Borer showed up in Michigan and it's been confusion ever since. Emerald Ash Borers are in the state of Kansas, basically from Lawrence to Kansas City. To our knowledge they aren't here yet. There are some things you can do to protect your ash tree, and they only attack ash trees, and if you want to know what you can do, give me a call at the Extension Office. But the ash/lilac borer is around every year. The adult moth of the ash/lilac borer looks like a wasp. Yes, the adult is a moth and it has clear wings that make it look like a wasp. The female will lay eggs at the base of ash trees or the stems of lilac or privet. The young borer larvae will hatch, climb a little ways up on the trunk and then bore into the trunk or stem. Once it is inside the trunk it will start burrowing around just under the bark and at that time it is too late to control it. Stems will weaken and die, young ash trees may end up breaking over half way up the trunk. You need to treat the trunk, not the entire plant, just the trunk or stems of the bush with Hi-Yield Garden, Pet, and Livestock Insect Control or 38 Plus Turf, termite and ornamental insect control. Mix up according to label directions and spray the bottom couple feet of stems and trunks to the point of runoff, and then treat again in about 4 weeks. The first treatment should be applied in the next 10 days. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Do I have to have a perfect lawn?

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Someone was in my office recently asking about grass alternatives for their yard. In this case the homeowner was allergic to grass. There are a lot of people with many allergies and grasses can be a big problem. In another case a homeowner had been planting grass in his backyard every fall for over ten years. It would come up looking fine, it'd still look good in the spring and as the summer went on, the grass slowly thinned out. In this case there was pretty significant shade in the backyard. In both cases we talked about alternatives to grass. As a society we seem to think that if you don't have a perfect stand of fescue, or bluegrass or ryegrass or whatever kind of grass, then you are a failure as a homeowner. This is a very sad state of affairs. There is, in my mind, a difference between a lawn and a yard. A lawn implies grass. A yard implies the area on your property outside your house. I know a lot of houses in eastern towns like Washington, D.C., that have wonderful yards without a blade of grass. Heavy shade prevents them from having grass, so they plant groundcovers. English Ivy, vinca minor, and numerous other plants depending on the hardiness zone, can work very well to establish a non turf green zone around the house. Many of these can be periodically mowed just to keep them uniform. One homeowner asked about just planting sunnier parts to white clover. I said go right ahead. The honeybees and the rabbits would love it. So don't be pressured into thinking that your yard, HAS to be a lawn. There are many other options, and I'm will to help you! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.