

### It Was A Rough Winter for Roses

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I used to grow a lot of roses, mainly hybrid teas. I was bundling them up in the winter, pruning and fertilizing regularly, watering and treating for leaf diseases. Then I got tired of that and switched over to Darwinian roses - you know, survival of the fittest! My roses and I have settled into a few miniatures and hybrid teas that seem to do just fine with benign neglect. It also puts me more in touch with environmental issues that the roses are facing, those being weather, insect and disease challenges. So here's what I've noticed with my roses this spring - the past 8 months have been hard on them! Part of it is likely drought over the winter but part of it was also the cold temperatures that we had. I'm still working my way through my roses but carefully go in and cut out all the dead. Get this as low on the plant as you can or back to green wood. Do note that there will be times that even after you prune 4 to 6 weeks after growth starts, you may still have some canes that up and die back. This is normal. Even after you get the dead cleaned out if the bush still seems a little overly full, meaning more than about 5 main canes in a hybrid tea, cut out some of the smaller main canes. Then work in your fertilizer carefully around the base and water the plant using an open hose or drip irrigation so as to keep the leaves dry. Wet leaves in this heat will lead to diseases in a hurry. If you need to increase mulch levels take time to clean up all old dead leaves from last year to reduce disease pressure. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Ash-Lilac Borers

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. With all the talk about emerald ash borers, people start to get jumpy when they see holes in the trunks of their ash trees. Be sure to remember that we have a native pest of ash trees, and lilac bushes, called the ash-lilac borer, isn't that an original name? If your lilac bush suddenly has a dead cane or two in late summer, this is the pest that caused that. They'll also get into privet by the way. In ash trees they are more of a problem in smaller trees. If you've ever seen an ash tree with a swollen knot on the trunk about 4 feet up, or if you've seen one just snapped off clean about 4 feet up, this is what they do. Once ash trees get 6 to 8 inches in diameter they rarely have many problems with ash-lilac borer. Emerald ash borer is a small beetle. Ash-lilac borer is a moth that if you saw it you'd think it was a wasp. Female borers lay eggs on the bark of ash trees or at the base of lilac or privet stems. The eggs hatch, the small larvae start to crawl up the stem looking for a place where they can chew their way in to the trunk or stem. Once inside they start to chew around often just under the bark which is where many of the crucial water and food transport vessels are. Prevention is done by treating the base of the plant and up 4 to 6 feet in trees with permethrin or bifenthrin. Mix according to label directions and spray all around the trunk or stems to the point of almost runoff. Do this soon, then repeat about again in about three weeks. Stressed plants are more prone to attack. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Annual Cool Season Weedy Grasses

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. There is a group of grasses, weedy grasses to be precise, which are becoming very noticeable now and there is absolutely nothing you can do about them, now. These are cool season annual grasses. They start growing in the fall and at that time they look fine, in fact they may almost seem lush. They overwinter, start growing in the late winter or early spring, again appearing just fine, when all of a sudden they start shooting heads. They will make seed rapidly and then they die sometimes leaving big brown spots in your yard. Even worse, several of these have seeds that get stuck in your socks or your pet's fur or the pads on their feet. These grasses go by names like little barley, downy brome, annual bluegrass, goose grass and foxtail barley. Right now all of these grasses are in their final growth stages producing ripe seed and dying. Even if you were to spray them with Roundup, you couldn't stop them from making seed. The crabgrass preventers you applied this spring won't help as the plants were already growing. These grasses get going because you give them thin turf and bare soil. Try to get your lawn thickened up and mowed taller. You can control them, at least in part, by using a crabgrass preventer applied in late summer, probably mid August. But you need to apply these products and then water them in if it doesn't rain in a few days. Do not do this if you will plant new grass in the fall as the herbicide will keep your lawn grasses from germinating also! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Cucumber Beetles

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Cucumber beetles look a lot like lady beetles, only they are yellowish green instead of pink, red or orange. Actually that's just one of the two species - one species has spots, the other has stripes. Cucumber beetles feed on cucumbers and other vine crops. The feeding damage that they do can cause minor damage, BUT the big problem is that they also carry bacterial wilt disease. One bite, a vine is infected and a few weeks later the whole vine collapses in just a day or two. Cucumber beetles overwinter as adults so they can start feeding on plants early on. Many times you can use row covers or cones to protect the young plants but as the plants start to vine out you'll need to start treating for them. Like squash bugs, you need to start treating before you even see the first beetle. Sevin, while fairly effective against cucumber beetles shouldn't be used regularly as it can cause buildup of spider mites. Permethrin, available in many formulations including Bonide Eight and Hi-Yield Lawn, Garden Pet and Livestock Insect control is probably a better choice. You'll need to spray weekly - try to spray up under the leaves as well as on top. As permethrin can be toxic to honeybees we recommend that once the plants start blooming you only spray right before dark when pollinating bees have pretty well quit visiting the flowers and returned to their hives. You can apply and harvest the same day but I'd recommend harvesting first and then spray later in the day! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Squash Bugs

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The annual scourge of the summer squash, zucchini and yellow crookneck or pumpkin growers, is the nasty evil squash bug. If you have pumpkin or summer squash in the ground and growing, you need to be treating. Here's the real issue. Squash bugs overwinter in debris and soil. The first generation comes out and lays eggs. The first generation is usually not very big. In fact, gardeners will see a squash bug here or there and not think too much about it. But the first generation matures, and they start laying eggs and then it gets out of control in a hurry. Once you start to see dozens on and around your plants, you are in trouble. Get an integrated approach. Start by keeping your plants healthy and well watered. Stressed plants are more likely to be attacked than healthy vigorously growing plants. Next, start spraying when you find a first egg mass or see your first squash bug. You can hand pick egg masses, but that's not going to control the squash bugs, it'll just merely reduce the numbers somewhat. Get 2 or 3 or 4 insecticides like Sevin, permethrin, bifenthrin and esfenvalerate and rotate through them following label directions for retreatment. Spray up under the leaves as well as the tops of the leaves. Place old wooden shingles or boards on the ground near the base of the plants and let the bugs hide under these in the heat of the day - then flip them over and spray them. You've got to use every trick in the book, or just give up and plant winter squash that are resistant! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.