

Gardening with Chuck Programs for April 15 - 21, 2019

Euonymous Winter Burnback

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Euonymous is a group of shrubs that we use heavily in the landscape. Several, like the Manhattan Euonymous, are a broadleaf evergreen. While it does normally keep its leaves all through the winter it can experience leaf loss in harsh winters like we had. I've seen a lot of euonymous that lost leaves this winter. Fortunately most of these are already budding out new leaves given the warmer spring weather. What can also happen is that cold weathers will actually kill the tips of the branches like we see some years on roses. The colder than average weather dries as much as freezes the tips and the dessication kills the branch tips. This isn't anything to worry about. As the new foliage comes on just trim off the dead tips. We often take care of these by simply shearing the bushes back. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Henbit

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This time of year, the term purple haze takes on a different term from what many people that remember the 1970s might think of. Throughout the area right now there is a low growing plant that can turn lawns and fields both to a lovely lavender hue. The plant is called henbit. It's a winter annual and in our lawns it is far easier to control it with late October herbicide applications. Once it starts blooming in the spring it is hard to kill, and will make seed while it is dying anyway. Henbit, along with dandelions are actually highly desirable early season food sources for bees. And lets just admit it, a large patch of henbit in full bloom in the April sun is quite spectacular. Go ahead and spray it now if you want, but just know that if you really want to control it, treat again in late October while it is still small. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Other Brown Evergreen Issues

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I hadn't anymore than recorded last weeks program about brownish looking cedar trees when I saw a whole bunch of brown cedars that were brown for a different reason. Cedars, along with many other evergreens like yews and pines are subject to salt burn from road and sidewalk deicers. In this case the cedars were just outside a guardrail on US77 and they were all uniformly brown but only on the road side of the trees. This is classic salt or deicer burn. Snow plows scrape off the snow and ice along with the applied salt and it gets showered onto the cedars and turns them noticeably brown. By now, with all the rain we've had, there's not much that can be done and many will grow out of it. But it points out the need to be careful with choice and placement of landscape plants AND deicers. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Overseeding

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Lawns were hit hard by the drought of 2018. Now that the weather is warming up and a little drying weather has occurred, it would be a good time to get some overseeding done in thin lawn areas. You need to get the seed into the soil so a power seeder or raking is probably the best way to do this. Use improved tall fescue at 3 to 5 pounds per 1,000 square feet or 1 to 2 pounds of an improved Kentucky bluegrass. Avoid the quick fix grass blends as these often contain perennial rye and sometimes even annual ryegrass that will germinate fast and look good, but will fade fast in the hot dry weather we can typically have with a Kansas summer. HOWEVER, if you have already applied a crabgrass preventer, you might as well forget overseeding until this fall as crabgrass preventers don't differentiate! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Late April Gardening

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Okay, we're over half way through April so what's available to be planted in the garden IF the soil moisture will allow it? For starters, potatoes, radishes and cabbage are off the table. Too much risk of hot weather before the crops would be ready. However, most of our root crops, things like turnips, beets, carrots and even onions can still go in the ground. Leafy vegetables like collards, chard, lettuce and spinach can still be planted pretty much until the end of the month. Melons can be planted the last week of April but summer squash and cucumbers need to wait until after about the first week of May. Sweet Corn can go in the very end of April unless we've had a bad spate of cold weather. For the rest of the crops, beans, okra, all the tomato relatives, especially tomatoes, just need to wait a while! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.