

Gardening with Chuck Programs for August 5 - 11, 2019

Ash Issues

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We have a disease that can attack green ash leaves. The name of the disease is long and hard to say so I just call it ash leaf spot. It's a late season disease and while it may be unsightly and knock a lot of leaves off your ash, it doesn't really hurt it in the long run. To protect the leaves you would have had to spray it back in June and July. Treating it now won't help in the least. Watering it may help but I honestly wouldn't worry about it. Once we get into August, most trees, especially mature trees, have adequate food reserves stored up to make it through the winter and start growing next spring. Insects that eat leaves from now on and loss of leaves from diseases don't really concern me very much. Spraying for most insect pests or trying to treat trees for leaf diseases in August is usually a waste. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Wilting

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Plants have many different mechanisms to deal with temperature and moisture stress. Grass plants like corn and even tomatoes will often roll their leaves up right down the main midrib. This slows down moisture loss and exposes less leaf material to the direct sun. Many plants, use wilting as a defense mechanism but this can confuse gardeners because plants will also wilt when they are dry. Under high temperatures plants will reduce the flow of water to the leaves and the leaves then wilt. By reducing water flow the plant is losing less water out of the tiny openings in the leaf called stoma or stomate so less water is lost. Never assume that a plant that is wilting in the middle of the afternoon needs water. Check it first thing in the morning. If it's wilted then, well it's dry and then you water it. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Evergreens can't wilt

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Yesterday I talked about wilting as a defense mechanism against heat and drought. But here's an intriguing twist. Evergreens, things like pines, junipers, arborvitae and especially spruces, never learned how to wilt. They can get hot, they can get dry, and they just stand there unchanged. They physically can not wilt. Big bad tough guys they are. But wilting can be a signal to homeowners that a plant needs to be watered. Young evergreens, and especially spruces at any age, need to be carefully monitored and watered. If we go more than about three weeks without at least a half inch of rain, anytime of the year, spruces need to be soaked with a slow running open hose. Don't use a root waterer - the best method is a garden hose running a slow amount so water soaks in, instead of running all around. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Watering new trees and shrubs

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Newly planted trees and shrubs, and that includes everything that was planted in the last two or three years, need to be watered once a week IF at least an inch of rain isn't received. Earlier in the year that wasn't a problem. July was another story though. Deep infrequent watering (meaning not every day) as well as mulching with organic mulches help reduce water loss. Newly transplanted trees are going to need about 10 gallons of water a week. On sandy soils they need that much twice a week. Standing around with a hose and a nozzle isn't going to do it. Most lawn sprinklers don't apply enough. A hose running a very slow trickle for several hours is a good way to soak the soil a foot down which is your goal. You can also use a 5 gallon bucket with a 1/8 inch hole in the bottom. Fill it up and let it dribble. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Late Season Crabgrass Control

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As often happens in August, crabgrass is becoming very visible right now. There are many products labeled as crabgrass killers and most of them work pretty good, but more so on small crabgrass. Quinclorac is the active ingredient and you may need to treat a couple of times 2 weeks apart and you may well not still get it all. Another product that is only available in BioAdvanced Extreme Crabgrass Killer or Bermudagrass Control for Lawns is fenoxaprop-p-ethyl. This product works very well even on large crabgrass that is headed out. These products stop growth fairly quickly but the plant may not show leaf discoloration and death for several weeks. Be sure to read and follow all label directions because there are restrictions on what kind of lawn grasses they can be used on and temperature restrictions. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.