

## Gardening with Chuck Programs for November 11 - 17, 2019

### Water Evergreens

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. One of the hardest things for homeowners to grasp is the fact that as the growing season winds down, evergreens don't really have a dormant period. Which means that even in the dead of winter, evergreens, which includes pines, cedars, junipers and spruces, carry on photosynthesis when the sun is shining and the temperature is at freezing or above. The problem is that photosynthesis uses water and if the soil is dry, as it has been getting, the evergreens may not find adequate water in the root zone and steal it from parts of the plant. This causes desiccation and what we will eventually call, winterkill. What will be helpful to your evergreens right now is to take a warm day and put a hose running slow out under the plant and soak up the root zone. Remember to disconnect the hose when done. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Processing Horseradish

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. After a hard freeze in the late fall is when you need to process horseradish. Large sized roots are dug for processing. Smaller pencil sized roots are replanted for future crops or to give away to others. Once the roots are washed and peeled, cut them into sections small enough to go into a blender or food processor along with a small amount of water and a couple of ice cubes. After running the processor to the desired fineness, vinegar or lemon juice is added to stop the process that makes horseradish strong. The sooner you add it the milder the horseradish will be. Use 2 to 3 T of vinegar per cup of horseradish sauce along with  $\frac{1}{2}$  t of salt. Since the kick of horseradish is odor based it is advisable that you do this outside with a little bit of breeze and when you open the lid keep your face turned away. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Putting Away Garden Tools

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Too many people, at the end of the gardening season, just stick their gardening tools in the garage or shed being glad for the end of the season. That is a disservice to the tools. My hoe was my grandfather's hoe and is over 100 years old. Take time to remove all dirt and plant debris with a steel brush and fine steel wool then apply a thin film of lightweight oil, not WD40 to protect from rust. Next check the handle, if wooden, for splinters or nicks. Sand these out so the handle is smooth and then use a good exterior grade polyurethane to reseal the handle. Linseed oil used to be used regularly but it tends to attract dust in storage so use a couple of coats of polyurethane. Once the handle is dry put the tools away in a dry location where they'll be ready for next year when the gardening fever strikes! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Rabbit and Rodent Protection

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As we move deeper into autumn and on towards winter it becomes a harsh world out there for not only plants but other critters to survive. Many of our furry little four legged friends will sometimes view some of our plants as an attractive meal OR someplace to try to demonstrate their superiority! Deer will often love to rub their antlers on trees. About the only thing that I've found that might help is to hang bars of Irish Spring Soap on twine in the trees you want to protect. No guarantees but I've heard good results from some homeowners. To stop rabbits from chewing the bark on thin barked young trees the best bet is to place 2 foot tall cylinders of 1 inch mesh chicken wire of a loose fitting slip on plastic barriers. Also keep mulch away from base of trees to reduce the risk of mice chewing on bark! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Knotweed Control

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Knotweed is a little plant that everyone probably knows by sight but not the name of. It's the weed that loves to grow in compacted soil along gravel driveways and dirt walk ways. It starts growing early in the year and is very green and soft but in the heat of summer becomes hard and stiff. You can use post-emerge sprays next spring and summer like Trimec or Weed-B-Gon. A better approach though is to use a pre-emerge weed control like the crabgrass preventers. However, most people are applying crabgrass preventers after the knotweed is already up and growing. If you want to use pre-emerge products, apply them now and water them in so they are active and ready to stop the knotweed when it germinates in late February. You'll still need to go back in at normal time to apply crabgrass control products. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.