

## Gardening with Chuck Programs for April 26 - May 3, 2020

### Bagworms

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Homeowners are spending more time in their yards this spring and many are noticing bagworm bags on their junipers and many other trees as well. These bags are often nearly two inches long, tannish brown and covered with dried up old foliage from the host plant. These are all last year's bags as bagworms have not gotten active yet. That'll happen when the eggs start hatching in late May and early June. Because of the heavy infestations the past couple of years we've changed our preferred control methods. Start spraying about the third week of May and then spray weekly through the end of June. Nearly any ornamental insecticide will control them but just apply with a lot of carrier for thorough coverage. I find spinosad is very effective. If you only want to spray once due to cost, aim for June 15<sup>th</sup>. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Orchardgrass

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This time of year homeowners will often find clumps of grass in their lawn that grows faster than their fescue or bluegrass. It's also a noticeably lighter green and upon close inspection the stems, at the base of the plant, are very flat. This is orchardgrass and it is a common contaminant of lower cost tall fescue mixes, especially K-31 tall fescue. Unfortunately there is no selective control. It doesn't really spread as it's a bunch grass, but it can be quite annoying. The two control options are carefully digging the clumps out of the lawn and the reseeding with high quality fescue seed or spot spraying the clumps with glyphosate and after they die, dig them out, smooth the soil and reseeding the spots. Either way will look ugly for a while. Or, a common third option, ignore the clumps and just keep mowing! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Fertilizing Onions

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Many people don't realize it but onions, as well as garlic, are heavy feeders and can really benefit from routine fertilizing especially if you are trying to grow big slicer onions. Since onions have a limited root systems, regular side dressing is very helpful. Hopefully you broadcast fertilizer prior to planting. About 2 to 3 weeks after the onions start to grow you want to fertilize them with a nitrogen fertilizer like nitrate of iron or ammonium sulfate. You can dribble this right down by the side of the row. Continue to do this about every 2 to 3 weeks until they really start to bulb which is about three weeks before harvesting. It's easy to see when they are starting to bulb as the ground starts to crack around the base of the plant. If it's dry remember to water after fertilizing and of course continue to control the weeds. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Termites or Ants?

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. With warm weather in spring, and especially following rain showers it isn't uncommon to encounter swarms of both termites AND ants. Both of these social insects produce winged reproductives in the spring and when the weather is right they come boiling it in huge swarms. The females hope to mate and then fly away somewhere and start a new colony. Many of these insects never make it being eaten by birds, predatory insects and other critters. But they can cause a lot of panic if homeowners encounter them outside their home. It's easy to tell them apart though. If you look closely ants will have a narrow wasp like waist, the antenna are elbowed and they have two pairs of wings that aren't the same length. Termites will be thick bodied, all four wings are the same length and antenna are curved. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Cedar-apple Rust

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The first evidence of cedar-apple rust showed up late last week after we had a nice day long rain followed by warm temperatures the following day. The evidence was orange things on cedar trees that look sort of like jellyfish. The orange tendrils were releasing spores that land on the leaves of susceptible apple trees and start that part of their two host life cycle. They don't really hurt cedar trees but boy can they defoliate susceptible apple trees both fruit and flowering crabs. Which means if you know your apple or flowering crab is susceptible you need to start spraying it now with the fungicide myclobutanil which is in Immunox and F-Stop Lawn & Garden Fungicide. Spray every 7 to 10 days through the end of May. Be sure to apply a thorough spray covering all the foliage for maximum protection. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.