

## Gardening with Chuck Programs for May 25 - 31, 2020

### Leaf Diseases of Trees

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Having had some damp periods this spring we are now starting to see a whole host of leaf disease issues show up in our trees. Don't worry about it! I have already noticed leaves falling off of several different species of trees. Highly susceptible apple varieties already have leaves showing cedar apple rust spots and dropping. A couple of different diseases are knocking leaves off of Siberian elms. Expect to see sycamores, ash and maple leaves falling due to anthracnose or in the case of ash trees, leaves being distorted from rust. None of these are fatal to the tree. None of these are seriously damaging to the tree. None of them can be treated for once you start seeing the spots on the leaves that have fallen off the trees. So don't waste money spraying and don't be concerned. The trees will releaf and be fine! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## European Elm Flea Weevil

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. A new insect that appeared in our local elm trees a few years ago, the European Elm Flea Weevil is starting to show up. They are a beetle, a weevil, but when disturbed they will sort of jump like a flea, hence the name. Don't worry, they don't bite humans or pets! While they will feed on all elm species they are especially attracted to Siberian elm, what most folks call Chinese elm. The larvae are actively feeding right now tunneling through the leaves leaving serpentine trails. Once they pupate into adults the adults will feed on the undersides of leaves creating small holes. While it may be an aesthetic nuisance there is only one generation per year and like the leaf diseases we talked about yesterday, the damage is quite inconsequential. The adults can be controlled with sprays but I don't recommend it. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Sweet Potatoes

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Sweet potatoes are one of the most cold sensitive crops we grow in the garden. They aren't just frost sensitive they don't like temperatures below 50 degrees. We normally wait until late May to plant them for this very reason. Sweet potatoes are often planted on a mounded ridge which allows the soil to warm. As they vine out the vines will root into the soil and this is where the edible root develops. Unlike potatoes which are a tuber, the part that we eat on the sweet potato is an enlarged root. The roots will continue to grow through the summer and do not lose quality as they grow bigger. They like moderately fertile soil and aggressive weed control. Side dress a couple of times through the summer. Don't let them wilt but they can tolerate hot and dry weather better than most garden vegetables. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Mowing Wet Grass

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. There is a lot of mis-information out there about mowing wet grass. You can mow wet grass first thing in the morning. It's not going to make disease issues, but it can be an issue if you are bagging and even if you're not bagging you can get clumps of wet grass. It's just easier to mow when it's not wet with dew. But sometimes you get into a several day run when it is just raining all the time and you can't get out and mow. Then you want the soil to dry out a little bit so your aren't tearing up the sod. By then the grass is ready to bale. When you encounter these times the best thing to do is to set your mower as high as it will go on the first cut, then wait a few days and mow it again at your standard cutting height. But don't make it a practice to let the grass get really tall and mow it short as this can hurt the turf health. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Fertilizing Warm Season Turf

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Many people curse Bermudagrass and others love it. Bermuda, along with Zoysia and buffalograss are warm season grasses that we use as turf in Kansas. They are fertilized very differently than our cool season fescue and bluegrass. Warm season grasses need to be fertilized during the warmer parts of the year when they are actively growing. All three of these grasses would appreciate a fertilization in early June amounting to about one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. That is all you need to do for Buffalo. Zoysia and Bermuda could use another treatment in early July of the same rate, 1 pound per 1000. Then Bermuda, if you want a really aggressive Bermuda lawn, could be fertilized a third time in early August. Recapping, fertilize buffalograss once, zoysia twice and Bermuda three times. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.