

Gardening with Chuck Programs for April 19 - 25, 2021

Frost Damage?

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We've been seeing some chilly weather since those early April warm days and maybe even some scattered frosts, which raises concern for frost damage on garden plants, flowers and fruit trees. Weather like this is exactly why I discourage gardeners from getting in a hurry to set out tender plants. And to be brutally honest, if you have tomatoes out in the garden and they get nipped, then you've gotten what you deserved. Yeah, I'm a harsh gardener. Most of the stuff that we have been telling you to plant will not be hurt by any of this. As for fruit trees in full bloom and even beyond, temperatures in the low 30s aren't a problem. Damage doesn't really start on all fruit species until roughly an hour of 28 degrees and 90% blossom kill occurs at about 23 to 25 degrees. So just calm down, it's okay. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Activate Your Crabgrass Preventer

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I suspect many homeowners apply their crabgrass preventers and feel that they are immediately set to go. Well, that isn't quite the case. Crabgrass preventers have to be activated by about a half inch of rain or irrigation to essentially carry the herbicide into the soil surface where the sprouting seeds will pick up the herbicide and stop germinating. Additionally, some of the newer products need a little bit of time after that activation for them to become fully active. It's best if you can irrigate or have rainfall within a couple of days of application and we've had several good rainfall events the past month to get applied preventers activated. If you are late getting your preventer activated it's advisable to get it watered in immediately unless rain is imminent. But you aren't done yet. Next you are going to read those crabgrass preventer instructions to see IF you will need to make a second application later in the year. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Ash-Lilac Borer

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. For as long as we have lived in Kansas there has been an insect pest known as the ash-lilac borer. This pest should not be confused with the emerald ash borer which we don't yet have around here. The ash lilac borer turns into a waspy looking moth. They attack both ash and lilac trees, especially young trees. The adults are emerging now and will soon start laying eggs at the base of lilac stems or ash trees. The little borer caterpillars will hatch out and crawl up a little ways and burrow into the trunk or stem. To control them you need to spray the base of the trees or the lilac shrubs from all sides up a couple feet on the plant, just really soaking it down good. Then you want to make a second application about 4 weeks after the first. Use a product with permethrin labeled for ash lilac borer. While permethrin is in a lot of products Hi Yield 38+ is one of the few that specifically mentions this pest. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Moles

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It's mole season. I walk across parts of my yard and feel the tunnels sink under my foot step. Moles are native. They've always been here and they will always be here. Moles eat grubs, earthworms, literally anything else that crawls through the soil. They don't eat plant roots but will make air pockets around roots that can cause damage to plants. All the mole poisons in the world and the noise makers, castor oil, chewing gum, and everything else are a waste of money. They. Don't. Work. You have three choices. You can use lots of pesticides to reduce the food sources in your lawn. You can try to trap them and that's a 15 minute explanation in itself. Or you can learn to live with them. If you want to try to trap them I have a good K-State bulletin that describes the process but you need a trap, several models are available, and a lot of patience and persistence. It is a process! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Wild Violets

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The wild violets in my yard in many places are blooming wonderfully and the cooler weather is treating them well. Wild violets are a valuable food source for certain butterfly species so I really don't worry about trying to control them. Many homeowners aren't quite the live and let live type though when it comes to their lawns. Most broadleaf lawn herbicides don't have what it takes to control wild violets. Basically you need the product triclopyr which is found in Turflon Ester, Triclopyr Ester and Weed-B-Gon Chickweed, Clover and Oxalis. There are many products that contain triclopyr but make sure they have wild violets and lawns on the label. The Weed-B-Gon product is also labeled for buffalograss and zoysia the others aren't. Make sure that the Weed-B-Gon product is the one that says Chickweed, Clover and Oxalis as part of the name. Other Weed-B-Gon products won't do it! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.