

### Iris Leaf Spot Control

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. If you have bearded iris you probably notice every summer that a lot of the leaves develop brown spots about a quarter inch in diameter. These spots can slowly enlarge and may eventually kill the leaf. This is iris leaf spot and while it rarely will kill a plant, it can weaken the plant, diminish the flower size and number the following year and basically make the plants just look ugly. The first step in controlling this disease is to get out there now and clean up all the old leaves and put them in the trash or burn them. The disease overwinters on the diseased leaves from last year. If you've had a lot of this disease then also follow up by treating with one of the many fungicides labeled for iris leaf spot as the new leaves appear this spring. Spray every ten days for 4 to 6 treatments and use a spreader/sticker too! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Pruning Deciduous Shrubs

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This is the time of year that bad things can happen to spring flowering shrubs like forsythia, lilac, spirea and quince. The bad thing that happens is that gardeners with spring fever go out and decide to start pruning. Unfortunately, most of our spring flowering shrubs bloom from buds produced on new wood produced last summer: at the ends of the branches. When those shrubs are pruned now, many of those flower buds are cut off and will never bloom. All of those plants that bloom first thing in the spring need to be left alone until AFTER they bloom. Then you can prune them. Shrubs grown mainly for foliage, like boxwood, holly, viburnum, etc. can be safely pruned now. We grow most of these for the foliage not the blooms. As for evergreens like yews and junipers, wait until after their spring growth. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Weed Control in Asparagus Beds

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. With it now being March, and some of the weather we've been having, it may not be much longer until established asparagus will start growing. Weed control in these asparagus beds needs to start now. Before the asparagus has come up, you can spray the bed with glyphosate to control any weeds that came up last fall. If there is green leaf material on these weedy plants, you can control them. Then follow up with an application of trifluralin which is the active ingredient found in many garden weed preventer products. Apply and then water in to activate it. Once you are through harvesting you can do a second weed control operation by removing all the spears below ground level, spraying with glyphosate and then another trifluralin application. Organic mulches can also help reduce weed pressure. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Weed Control in Peony Beds

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Peony beds, and other perennial flower beds are often a challenge to keep weed free or even relatively weed free. Mulches can help but there are also weed preventers that can work very well. Both trifluralin and dithiopyr have fairly broad reaching labels that allow for use on perennial flower beds. They can be used in annual beds too IF you apply after seedlings have emerged or if you are just using transplants. Trifluralin is found in many garden weed preventers including Preen. Dithiopyr is the chemical name for Dimension which is found in some turfgrass crabgrass preventers. Be sure to read the label to make sure it is approved for use in flower beds. After application you'll need a quarter inch of rain or irrigation to activate the herbicide. Dithiopyr is going to have much longer activity but both will work. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

## Lettuce

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. A lot of people think potatoes or peas as the first crop to get planted in the ground but in reality, lettuce may be the best crop to get going in the garden in the early spring. Many people think traditional head lettuce when they hear the word lettuce but head lettuce just doesn't grow well in Kansas.

However, leaf, bibb, romaine and buttercrunch lettuce can all be grown fairly successfully here.

You can plant lettuce around the 15<sup>th</sup> of March in the garden, but you can also get small plants seeded for transplant just about anytime from early February on. Personally, I just direct seed it in the garden. Once it comes up thin leaf lettuce to one plant every 4 to 6 inches and for the others, one every 6 to 8 inches. I planted some buttercrunch last year and was very pleased with how well it did! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

