

Gardening with Chuck Programs for May 23 - 29, 2022

Dry Weather Winterkill

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I planted 6 new mum plants last September. They grew well, they bloomed well and then they went dormant. And I quit watering them. So far this spring only 3 of the 6 have come up. In hindsight, they were planted into very dry ground and when I watered them, it was just on the plant and I doubted that I ever soaked up all the ground around them. Well, it stayed dry all winter. I know my blue spruces needed to be watered but got started late on that and I lost the top 2/3 out of one of my spruces. It's been very dry and the long range forecast is that this will continue. Pay close attention to your plants. Evergreens like spruces and pines, need to be given a deep soaking with a slow running hose once a month if it stays dry. Newly planted annuals and perennials need TLC and lots of water. Keep watering! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Environmental Stress

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I am called out to look at a lot of plants. Tree problems are probably the worst because as Kansans, we have a strong emotional attachment to our trees. 90% of the time the problem with the tree, if there really is a problem, isn't something that I can prescribe an insecticide or a fungicide for. It's too late to do anything or the problem is environmental. Dry weather damage, cold or hot weather damage, flooding - you name it and I've seen it. Sometimes it's herbicide misuse by the homeowner or someone else. Not things that I can say, spray this and the world will be better. One of the biggest challenges is that we pick a tree that we like, then try to figure out where to put it in our yard. Start with deciding where we want to plant a tree, figure out the characteristics, then select a tree that fits the spot! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Prune Spring Flowering Shrubs Now

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Most of our spring flowering shrubs have wrapped up blooming now. A few lilacs may still be blooming but many of them are done or about done blooming. All of these early blooming shrubs bloom on new growth that the shrub made the previous year. So to encourage these plants to continue blooming without getting too out of hand in size, it is important to prune them now, right after they get through blooming. Prune them back a little smaller than you'd like them so as they grow back, they fit in nicely. After pruning sprinkle a half cup of general fertilizer around the base of each plant and water it in. This little shot of fertilizer will stimulate the plant to put on new growth. The flower buds will be formed in July and August so if it continues to be dry, watering every other week would be helpful! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Peony Care Post Blooming

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Even though we're still just ahead of Memorial Day, a lot of peonies have already bloomed and will be done blooming before long. It's time for homeowners to start taking care of those peonies so that they bloom well next year. First of all take an inventory of how each plant bloomed. If peonies are blooming less and less then you likely need to dig them and reset them as the buds have gotten too deep, or maybe they need to be moved to where they don't have so much tree shade. Clip the blossoms off as they blow out so the plant doesn't waste energy making seeds. Peonies are best fertilized in the fall after they've gone dormant and again in the spring just after new growth starts. If you didn't fertilize at all, give them a little bit now and then fertilize them again in the fall. Leave the leaves on until August. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Late Spring Rose Care

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Many homeowners prune their roses in the fall or the spring and that's all they do. In reality it is best to prune roses regularly through the late spring and summer. As old flowers blow out and fade, clip them off. If you have had multiple flowers on a stem, once the last one is done clip the whole stem off to keep it from looking too ragged. Look for blackspot and other leaf diseases. Keeping the rose leaves dry will reduce disease issues. If disease start to show up, clean out infected leaves and treat with a broad spectrum fungicide. Roses are also heavy rose feeders and an application of rose fertilizer, or a balanced general purpose fertilizer about once a month will keep fueling the plant to keep blooming. While roses can survive heat and dry weather, they'll only thrive with regular watering! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.