

Horticulture 2017 Newsletter

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Video of the Week: [Growing Vegetables in Containers](#)

TURFGRASS

Orchardgrass in Tall Fescue Lawns



Orchardgrass often infests tall fescue lawns. Unfortunately, orchardgrass is lighter green and faster growing than tall fescue, so it is very visible. Homeowners complain of the light green tufts of grass wherever this weed has become established. Even worse, there are no herbicides that will kill the orchard grass without also killing the turf. About the only good thing about orchardgrass is that it is a bunch grass and does not spread.

Orchardgrass often comes in as a contaminant in grass seed, especially K-31 tall fescue. Buying good grass seed is the first line of defense against this weed. Orchardgrass is a pasture grass and therefore is not found in the “weed seed” portion of the seed label. Rather, orchard- grass will be listed as “other crop seed.” Try to buy grass seed that has 0.0% “other crop seed.”

Control options are few and painful. Use glyphosate (Roundup, Killzall Weed and Grass Killer, Kleeraway Systemic Weed and Grass Killer and others) to spot spray orchardgrass clumps. Any lawn grasses you hit will be killed, so keep the spots sprayed as small as possible. Wait until the spots have turned brown and then cut out the clumps and replace with a small piece of sod. Large numbers of orchardgrass clumps may mean it is more practical to kill the entire lawn and start over. This should be done in the fall rather than now.

For information on identification of orchardgrass, including images, go to:
http://kswildflower.org/grass_details.php?grassID=15 (Ward Upham)

Keep Mower Blades Sharp

Lawn-mowing season is here. Remember that dull blades give the lawn a whitish cast. A dull blade does not cut cleanly but rather shreds the ends of the leaf blades. The shredded ends dry out, giving the lawn that whitish look. A sharp mower blade is even more important when the turf starts putting up seed heads next month. The seed head



stems are much tougher than the grass blades and more likely to shred. Under normal use, mower blades should be sharpened about every 10 hours of use. (Ward Upham)

VEGETABLES

Fertilizing Cole Crops



If you planted cole crops such as cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower earlier this spring, they will need a little fertilizer boost. These plants need to mature before summer heat arrives, so they must grow quickly while the weather is cool. A sidedressing of fertilizer about 3 weeks after transplanting helps plants continue to grow rapidly.

Use fertilizers high in nitrogen for sidedressing such as nitrate of soda or blood meal at the rate of 2 pounds per 100 feet of row. You may also use lawn fertilizers that have close to 30 percent nitrogen such as a 30-3-4 or 29-5-4 but the rate should be cut in half to 1 pound per 100 feet of row. Do not use lawn fertilizers that have weed killers or preventers. Fertilizer must be watered in if timely rains don't do that job for you.

We have a sheet available that gives recommendations on how to sidedress specific vegetable crops. It can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/j2ggaa6> (Ward Upham)

FRUIT

Fertilizing Strawberries and Brambles



Most garden soils in Kansas have adequate levels of all nutrients other than nitrogen IF the area has been fertilized in the past. However, it is recommended that a soil test be done to be sure of the nutrient needs of your fruit planting. If the soil test recommends phosphorus and potassium, use a 10-10-10 fertilizer instead of what is recommended below but triple the rate. For example, instead of ½ cup per 10 feet of row, use 1.5 cups per 10 feet of row.

Strawberries (June-Bearing): June-bearing strawberries are not fertilized in early spring as this can make the berries soft and more prone to rot. Fertilize at renovation and again in late August to early September. In most cases, strawberries need primarily nitrogen, so the recommendations are for a high nitrogen fertilizer such as a 27-3-3, 29-5-4, 30-3-3 or something similar. Though recommended for lawns, these fertilizers will also work well for strawberries as long as they do not contain weed killers or crabgrass preventers. Apply ½ cup for every 10 feet of row. Note: For more information on renovating strawberries, see page four at <http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf598.pdf>

Strawberries (Everbearing or Day-Neutral): Fertilize in the spring as growth starts and again in early August. Use the rates recommended for June-bearing strawberries. Everbearing (dayneutral) strawberries are not renovated.

Brambles (Blackberries and Raspberries): In most cases, brambles need primarily nitrogen, so use a high nitrogen fertilizer such as a 27-3-3, 29-5-4, 30-3-3 or something similar unless a soil test directs otherwise. Though recommended for lawns, these fertilizers will also work well as long as they do not contain weed killers or crabgrass preventers. Apply ½ cup for every 10 feet of row. Fertilize in spring as growth begins. (Ward Upham)

Fruit Tree Sprays and Rain



A spreader-sticker should be used in fruit tree sprays to improve the distribution and retention of fungicides and insecticides on fruit and leaves. However, even with a spreader-sticker, a rain can reduce the length of time the materials are effective. Less than one inch of rain since the last spray will not significantly affect residues. One to two inches of rain will reduce the residue by one half. Reduce the number of days until the next spray by one half. More than two inches of rain since the last spray will remove

most of the spray residue. Re-spray as soon as possible. (Ward Upham)

Pest Control on Fruit Trees

It can be a challenge to know how to spray fruit trees for pest control. Spray schedules will vary depending on whether the trees have fruit or not. Following are hints on what to spray this year for our most common fruit trees.

Peaches, nectarines and apricots: Most trees do not have fruit due to the December 18 cold snap and/or a late frost. Fruit buds on peaches and nectarines are most often killed if the temperature reaches -10 degrees. We had -10 degrees in Manhattan. The tree is fine but there will not be fruit any year with temperatures this low. Some apricots can also lose fruit buds at -10 degrees.

If there will not be any fruit, there isn't any need for being on a spray schedule. If there is fruit, use a product that contains captan or myclobutanil (Immunox, Fertilome F-Stop Lawn and Garden Spray) from now until about two weeks before harvest. Spray about every 10 days.

If a specific problem develops such as borers, peach leaf curl or gummosis, see our listing of common problems at <http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/plant-pest-problems.html>. Look under "Peach" for possible problems and what to do about them.

Cherries: We often have good fruit on cherries without spraying. However, a wet spring can lead to problems with brown rot. Myclobutanil (Immunox, Fertilome F-Stop Lawn and Garden Spray) or Captan will give good protection. Cherry fruit fly may attack the cherries with the

maggot causing damage to the fruit. Malathion (check label), Bonide Fruit Tree & Plant Guard or Sevin can be used for control.

Pears: Pears are often able to escape damage without spraying. If trouble does arise, use the same recommendations given for apples.

Apples: Apples are the crop most in need of a spray schedule. Unless you have disease-resistant trees, cedar-apple rust is a perennial problem. The larvae of the codling moth is the insect most likely to damage fruit. Control can be a challenge due to changing labels and an extended spray season. See our article in our March 21, 2017 newsletter on “Apple Tree Sprays” for details.

You can find the newsletter at

http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/2017/March21_2017_12.pdf. (Ward Upham)

Contributors: Ward Upham, Extension Associate

To view Upcoming Events: <http://hnr.k-state.edu/events/index.html>

The web version includes color images that illustrate subjects discussed. To subscribe to this newsletter electronically, send an e-mail message to cdipman@ksu.edu or wupham@ksu.edu listing your e-mail address in the message.

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