

Horticulture 2023 Newsletter

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1712 Claflin, 2021 Throckmorton Plant Science Cntr.
Manhattan, KS 66506 (785) 532-6173

Video of the Week: [Dividing Daylilies](#)

REMINDERS

1. Avoid fertilizing ornamentals now so they harden off before winter
2. Take cuttings from geraniums and begonias for wintering indoors. See <https://kansashealthyyards.org/all-videos/video/cuttings-to-grow-inside-for-winter>
3. Turn compost pile and add water when dry

TURFGRASS

Fall Planting Time is Approaching for Turfgrass: Buyer Beware!

LOT # L155M-9-TF-499			
PURE SEED	KIND	GERM	ORIGIN
24.95 %	2ND MILLENNIUM TALL FESCUE	90 %	OR
19.83 %	FOCUS TALL FESCUE	90 %	OR
19.78 %	OLYMPIC GOLD TALL FESCUE	90 %	OR
19.65 %	APACHE 3 TALL FESCUE	90 %	OR
14.84 %	BLADE RUNNER TALL FESCUE	90 %	OR
0.00 %	OTHER CROP		
0.95 %	INERT MATTER		
0.00 %	WEED SEED		
NOXIOUS WEED: NONE FOUND		NET WT. 50 LBS	TEST DATE: 1/2009

Not all grass seed is created equal. Lower quality seed can introduce unwanted weeds and a lot of extra work to eradicate it later.

Orchardgrass and/or rough bluegrass (*Poa trivialis*) are the names to watch for when preparing to overseed. These perennial grassy weeds cannot be selectively controlled once

introduced to a lawn.

Orchardgrass grows more rapidly and is lighter green than our turfgrasses. It doesn't spread but creates unsightly tufts of light green bunch grass in the lawn. Rough bluegrass creates fine-textured, circles in the lawn. Initially it can blend in with the other grasses, but turns brown quickly with the summer heat. When temperatures cool it greens up again.

Understanding the contents printed on the label of the grass seed bag will save you from introducing unwanted species. Look for the percent "Other Crop Seed" or "Other Crop" printed on the label. "Other Crop" includes any species grown intentionally such as turfgrasses and pasture grasses. Unfortunately, orchardgrass and rough bluegrass fall into this category. By law, seed labels must identify the percentage, by weight, of "Other Crop Seed" in the bag. However, the species does not have to be named unless it constitutes 5% or more of the contents.

Knowing what percentage of "Other Crop" is too much depends on what the "Other Crop" is comprised of as well as the buyer's preference. "Other Crop" could include small amounts of a species that will not significantly impact your lawn such as perennial ryegrass in a bag of tall fescue. On the other hand, it could include orchardgrass or rough bluegrass. Since the

homeowner has no easy way of knowing what is included in the “Other Crop,” look for a bag of seed where the percentage of “Other Crop” is as close to zero as possible. Quality seed may have 0.01% “Other Crop” or less. “Weed Seed” listed on the label should also be 0.01% or less. (Cynthia Domenghini)

VEGETABLES

Anthracnose of Tomatoes



Reports of tomato anthracnose are increasing so it's time to share some information about how this disease spreads and what can be done about it. As with many problems of the garden, preventative efforts go a long way.

Description: High humidity and frequent rainfall favor development of the fungal disease, anthracnose. Most often seen in the later part of the growing season on ripe fruit, anthracnose reduces the quality and yield of the tomato

harvest.

Damage: Symptoms begin as small, circular lesions that are slightly depressed on the surface of the fruit. Spots grow both in diameter of the circles and the depth of the depressions. The sunken lesions give a water-soaked appearance beneath the skin of the fruit. At the center of the lesions are black, concentric rings which are small fruiting structures (acervuli). This is the disease-causing fungus.

During humid weather, the fruiting structures release buff-colored fungal spores (conidia). As lesions grow, they can join and cause the fruit to decay which promotes microorganisms to invade and rot the fruit entirely.

Control: Anthracnose spores survive in plant debris and soil. Spores can get splashed onto fruit during a heavy rain or even with overhead watering. This continues the spread of the disease. Proper cultural practices can prevent this by using mulch over the soil around the tomato plants and removing plant debris from the ground. Promote air flow to reduce humid conditions by staking the tomato plants. Use drip irrigation or a soaker hose to prevent splashing spores onto plants.

Chlorothalonil is effective and has a 0-day waiting period from application to harvest. Products that contain chlorothalonil include, but are not limited to, Fertilome Broad Spectrum Landscape & Garden Fungicide; Ortho Garden Disease Control; Bonide Fungonil Concentrate; Hi-Yield Vegetable, Flower, Fruit and Ornamental Fungicide and GardenTech Daconil. (Cynthia Domenghini)

FRUIT

Are Crabapples Safe to Eat?



Crabapple trees are favored in the landscape for the multiple seasons of interest they provide. From the spring flowers to the colorful foliage and fruit, crabapples are typically grown for their ornamental value. Size is the main difference between crabapples and traditional apples. Fruit that are two-inches in diameter or larger are classified as apples while those smaller than two-inches are crabapples. The fruit is edible regardless of size, though crabapples are too bitter for most people when eaten straight from the tree.

Crabapples naturally contain pectin making them suitable for preserves as well as pies, cider and vinegar. The size of the fruit ranges from ¼-inch to two-inches and may be more work than it's worth to harvest and process. Choosing not to harvest crabapple fruit should not be considered a waste, however, as they provide a great food source for birds and other wildlife. (Cynthia Domenghini)

ORNAMENTALS

Dividing Daylilies



Every three to five years daylilies should be divided to promote flowering. This task is sometimes done during the spring but it is preferable to complete it in September.

Because of the extensive root system, a sharp knife may be required. However, cutting the roots with a knife can cause more stress to the plant and should only be done if necessary. Alternatively, use a shovel to dig up the entire daylily clump. Remove the soil from the roots by shaking it or spraying the roots with water. Separate the plants into clumps of two or three. Cut the leaves to about half their height. This will enable the roots to better support the plant without falling over while also reducing the water lost through transpiration.

Replant the divided clumps at the same depth 24 to 36 inches apart. Flowering will be limited next year but will become more vigorous until it is time for dividing again. (Cynthia Domenghini)

Spring Flowering Shrubs



Spring-flowering shrubs typically establish buds for next year in August and September. Avoid pruning these shrubs now as it will negatively affect next year's bloom. Water, as needed, this time of year to support the plants' new growth.

Examples of spring-flowering shrubs include Forsythia, Flowering Quince, Almond, Beautybush, Deutzia, Pyracantha, Lilac, Mock Orange, Cotoneaster, Weigela, Viburnum and Witchhazel. (Cynthia Domenghini)

MISCELLANEOUS

Composting: What to Add



The recipe for the most efficient compost is the right combination of carbon and nitrogen. "Browns" are the materials that have higher amounts of carbon than nitrogen. These are dried items such as leaves, twigs, straw, wood chips and sawdust. It is best to chop up the dried materials to expedite decomposition.

"Greens" are the materials that provide a good source of nitrogen such as coffee grounds, egg shells, fruit and vegetable scraps and fresh plant parts. Manure is another green waste that can be added but ensure it is manure from farm-type animals such as cows, sheep, etc. and not pets (dogs, cats, etc.) Pet waste may

introduce diseases into the compost.

Layer the compost pile alternating between six to eight inches of brown waste and two to three inches of green waste until the pile reaches three to five feet tall. You can wet down each layer of "browns" as you build the pile. This combination of materials creates an ideal environment for microorganisms to get to work decomposing. If you do not have enough "greens," you can use a garden fertilizer to get the nitrogen benefit. (Cynthia Domenghini)

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