

# Horticulture 2024 Newsletter

## No. 22 June 3, 2024

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

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### K-State Garden Hour



### Growing Cut Flowers for the Home & Farmers Market

Wednesday, June 5th 12:00PM -1:00PM CST

Join Cynthia Domenghini, K-State Horticulture and Garden Management Instructor, as she covers the basics of establishing a cut flower garden. Learn ideas for preparing soil, seed starting, flower varieties, irrigation set-up, maintenance, and even marketing tips for your floriferous crops!



Register Here!



Please register for this free Zoom Webinar at:  
[ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour](https://ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour)



#### Are you a gardener? Do you know a gardener?



If so, email [cdom@ksu.edu](mailto:cdom@ksu.edu) to be featured in an upcoming newsletter as part of our Garden Spotlight feature.

#### 2024 Kansas Turf and Ornamentals Field Day

August 1, 2024, at Rocky Ford Turfgrass Research Center in Manhattan, KS.

<https://www.k-state.edu/turf/events/2024TurfFieldDayProgram.pdf>

## VIDEO OF THE WEEK: Common Tomato Problems Part 1



### GARDEN TO-DO

- Remove sucker growth from fruit trees
- Stop harvesting asparagus so plant can store energy for next year
- Remove dead foliage from spring flowering bulbs
- Remove tree stakes that have been in place for at least one year

### TURF

#### Thatch Control in Warm-Season Lawns



Ornamental plants need to be cleaned up periodically as leaves and blooms die back. The same is true for grass. As grass plants grow, older plant material falls away to the soil level and can build up. This is called thatch and it can become problematic if it is thicker than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.

A thick layer of thatch can restrict water infiltration and reduce the efficacy of pesticide/herbicide treatments. When thatch

accumulates, grass plants tend to root into this layer instead of deeper into the soil. Since thatch dries quickly, the lawn will suffer from drought stress. Kentucky bluegrass, zoysiagrass, bermudagrass and creeping bentgrass are the varieties of turf most likely to be affected by thatch buildup.

Power-raking and core-aerating are the best strategies for preventing thatch buildup. For warm-season grasses, it is best to do this in June or July when the lawn is actively growing and can recover from thinning more efficiently. If the thatch is  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inches thick, core aerating can be done. Repeat passes with the aerator until the holes are about 2-inches apart.

If thatch is thicker than ¾-inches, it will need to be power-raked. Set the blades of the rake only deep enough to remove the thatch so the lawn is not severely damaged.

Thatch can be prevented by fertilizing properly and avoiding excessive nitrogen applications. Water to the root zone and only as needed. Mow at the recommended height.

## FLOWERS

### Rust on Hollyhock Flowers

*Description:* Hollyhock rust is a fungal disease that is most prevalent on hollyhocks, but other members of the mallow family are also susceptible. The fungus is introduced by infected plants. Fungal spores can travel by wind and splashing water as well. Warm, humid weather supports the fungal growth. The fungus can overwinter on infected plant debris and spread to new plants in the spring.



*Symptoms:* Orange-yellow spots develop on the lower leaves and sometimes brown spots will appear on stems. Raised bumps that are reddish-brown later develop on the undersides of leaves beneath the orange-yellow spots. These are the reproductive structures of the fungus. The infected leaves may develop holes and eventually die back.

*Control:* Prevention is the best approach against hollyhock rust. Begin with healthy plants each year and remove all plant debris from the previous growing season. Allow adequate spacing between plants so the fungus is less likely to spread if one plant is infected. Water at the soil level and avoid splashing on the plant.



If a plant develops rust, remove the infected leaves immediately and dispose of them. Plants that have a history of infection may benefit from a preventative fungicide when the weather is warm and humid. Spray every two weeks until the weather is dry. Sulfur and myclobutanil (Immunox, Monterey Fungi-Max, F-Stop Lawn & Garden Fungicide) are recommended. If the temperature rises above 85 degrees F within 24 hours of application the sulfur treatment may cause damage to treated leaves.

## Rose Trouble

Several counties are reporting problems with their roses. One of those problems is *rose rosette virus*. The classic symptoms that may appear include:

- Rapid elongation of a new shoot
- “Witches’ broom” (clustering of small branches)
- Branches develop excessive thorns
- Small, deformed, reddish-purple leaves
- Certain varieties may develop streaks or blotches of reddish-purple on stems and petioles
- Plant death



Infected plants, including the roots, should be removed and destroyed. Garden tools that come in contact with the plant need to be sterilized to avoid spreading the virus.

*Rose blackspot* has also been reported. Blackspot is a fungal disease that can cause these symptoms:

- Dark, circular lesions with feathery edges on top surface of leaves (usually lower leaves are infected first)
- Raised, purple spots on young canes
- Yellowing between spots on infected leaves
- Leaf drop



Prevention is the best approach for controlling blackspot. Purchase resistant cultivars of roses. Use drip irrigation to avoid splashing water on the leaves. Ensure roses are planted in the sun with good air movement. Don't crowd plants together in a planting. Diseased leaves should be removed from the ground and infected plant parts should be pruned out of the plant.

If you choose to apply fungicide you can treat on a 10–14-day schedule. Some recommended fungicides include tebuconazole (Bayer Disease Control for Roses, Flowers and Shrubs), myclobutanil (Immunox, Immunox Plus), triticonazole (Ortho Rose & Flower Disease Control) and chlorothalonil (Broad Spectrum Fungicide, Garden Disease Control). As always, follow all label instructions carefully.

## Deadheading Flowers

Deadheading is a method of pruning out old flowers. This practice allows plants to direct their energy to new growth and producing new flowers rather than creating seed. The frequency this needs to be done depends on the plant variety and the environmental conditions. Some plants do not require deadheading at all. *Lobelia*, *Impatiens*, *Hibiscus* and *Oxalis* are examples of plants that are “self-cleaning” (do not require deadheading).



example of this.

For plants that benefit from deadheading, use sharp, sterile pruners and cut the stem below the spent bloom just above the next node. The node is the area of the stem where the leaves extend. For plants such as *Gerbera* daisies that have a bloom atop a long stem, cut the stem down to the base of the plant. Some plants can be deadheaded using just your forefinger and thumb to remove the old flowers. *Petunias* are one

In the fall you may consider leaving blooms intact to allow plants to set seed and feed the birds.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Mushrooms after Rain

Mushrooms are the fruiting structures produced by various fungi. The appearance of the mushrooms varies depending on the fungi species. The fungi are present beneath the soil surface all along, but when conditions are right, they are able to set fruit. The result is mushrooms popping up in the landscape.

Warm, moist conditions tend to favor mushroom development. Beneath the soil the fungus feeds on decaying organic matter. Rainy weather speeds up the decay which gives a boost of nutrients to the fungus allowing it to have proper nutrition for fruiting. Therefore, the appearance of mushrooms is often an indicator that the soil is healthy and has a good level of organic matter.



Though many of the mushrooms are harmless to our plants, some can cause or indicate problems. Fungi mycelium grow underground from a center point outward in a circular pattern. When the conditions are favorable, mushrooms appear on the outer edge of the ring above the soil surface in an arc or circular shape. In lawns this is called a fairy ring. This can cause problems in the lawn as the mycelium can form a dense mat that decomposes organic matter and releases nitrates into the soil. The lawn in the outer area of the circle grows more rapidly and turns a darker green color than other areas of the lawn. The mycelium mat can also reduce water infiltration and there may be some turf dieback in this area.

Fairy rings are difficult to control. You can sometimes eliminate the ring by digging to a depth of 6 to 12 inches by 12 inches wide inside and outside of the ring, refilling the hole with non-infested soil. Those in commercial businesses will sometimes use a fungicide to control fairy rings but these products are not available to homeowners. See <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/EP155.pdf> for more information on these fungicides.

Mushrooms will disappear as the weather dries out again or when it gets colder. The fungi remain beneath the surface ready to send up fruit once conditions are favorable again. Because most mushrooms are harmless to the landscape there is little need to try to control or prevent them.

## MENTAL HEALTH MONDAY

### Designing a Vertical Garden



Vertical gardens can be a solution to growing plants when in-ground space is limited. They can also be a decorative feature for the patio. Designing and creating a purposeful project will present challenges and this is true for garden projects too. A task such as designing a vertical garden gives growers the opportunity to build resilience as they persevere through obstacles. Continue reading to discover our recommendations for decorative vertical gardening.

KSRE Publication: [Designing a Vertical Garden](#)

## QUESTION of the WEEK



### Poison Ivy

*How do I get rid of poison ivy growing around my roses?*

We have had several emails about controlling poison ivy. Individual sensitivity to plant toxins varies; cover arms and legs when handling the plants. When poison ivy plants are growing among desired plants herbicide treatment may not be ideal due to the risk of overspray and drift. When the soil is wet, use gloves and pull or dig young plants out of the soil.



Large vines can be cut at the base. Treat the remaining stumps with herbicide. Recommendations for herbicides include those with the following active ingredients: triclopyr, glyphosate, 2, 4-D and dicamba. Retreatment may be necessary and always follow label instructions.

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