



# Horticulture Newsletter

**June 16, 2026**

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Horticulture and  
Natural Resources

## Video of the Week:



As many gardeners have experienced, tomato plants can suffer from many insect, disease, and environmental stress problems. In this two-part video series, we'll explore some of the most common early season tomato problems, including physiological leaf curl, blossom end rot, herbicide injury, septoria leaf spot, and more. [This week's video discusses part one of some of the most common tomato problems](https://kansashealthyyards.org/all-videos/video/common-tomato-problems-part-1), and in only two minutes, will help you identify some of the most common tomato issues happening in the garden right now: <https://kansashealthyyards.org/all-videos/video/common-tomato-problems-part-1>

## Announcements:

### **Join The Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program Today:**

Extension Master Gardener volunteers are people who love gardening and want to give back by improving their local community. Master Gardeners love to learn and have an enthusiasm for sharing their gardening skills and knowledge with others. If this sounds like you, consider becoming an Extension Master Gardener volunteer. Programs across Kansas are currently looking for individuals who are interested in learning about horticulture best practices in Kansas, and volunteering to share that passion with others. Applications are being accepted now across the state for training that begins this fall. [Visit our website to learn more](https://extension.k-state.edu/master-gardener/get-involved/volunteer.html) about volunteering in your county: <https://extension.k-state.edu/master-gardener/get-involved/volunteer.html>



**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Department of Horticulture  
and Natural Resources

2021 Throckmorton Plant Science Center  
1712 Claffin, Manhattan, KS 66506

HortSupport@ksu.edu (785)-532-6173 [www.hnr.k-state.edu](http://www.hnr.k-state.edu)

## **John C. Pair Horticulture Research Center Field Day & Open House Events:**

Save the dates to experience gardening research in full bloom during the John C. Pair Horticulture Research Center's upcoming events. For 55 years the John C. Pair Horticultural Research Center in Haysville, KS has been testing a wide range of plants — from trees and shrubs to turfgrass, fruits, vegetables, and even industrial hemp — to identify and develop the best performing plants for Kansas. Visit this incredible research facility in-person with tours happening this fall.

There are two unique ways to participate:

- **Horticulture Industry Field Day:** Join us **Thursday, August 6, 2026** for a commercial horticulture industry field day. This event is designed for employees from all segments of the turf & ornamentals industry. Participants will attend research presentations, commercial exhibits, and tours. Pre-registration is required. Cost is \$35.00 per ticket and includes a boxed lunch. Learn more at: <https://www.kansasturfgrassfoundation.com/annual-ktf-field-day.html>
- **Public Open House:** Join us **Saturday, August 8, 2026** for a public open house. This is a free, come and go event for the whole family. Experience an up-close look at current research, take a tram ride tour around the station, and participate in interactive booths. There will be activities for all ages of the community. Learn more at: <https://www.sedgwick.k-state.edu/news/newsreleases/2026/Pair-Center-Public-Open-House-26.html>

### **John C. Pair Horticultural Center Public Open House**

**Saturday, Aug. 8, 2026  
7:00 am - 1:00 pm**

At The John C. Pair Horticultural Center  
1901 E. 95th St. South, Haysville, KS

- FREE ADMISSION
- OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
- COME & GO EVENT
- FAMILY ACTIVITIES
- INTERACTIVE BOOTHS

**Explore 55 Years Of Plant  
Research Featuring Tours Of:**

- Annual Flower Trials
- Best Trees of Kansas
- No Irrigation Turfgrass
- Industrial Hemp
- Water-Wise Landscapes
- Sunflower Varieties
- Sweet Potatoes
- Turfgrass Varieties



## **Garden Calendar:**

- Renovate June bearing strawberry beds after fruit production has stopped.
- Plant sweet potatoes now. Sweet potatoes can be planted from mid- to late-May through June.
- Pinch herbs to keep bushy and fresh with new growth.
- Once the foliage from spring bulbs has turned completely brown, it is safe to remove dead foliage.
- Deadhead spent flower blossoms to encourage annuals and perennials to continue flowering.
- Core aerate zoysia, Bermuda, and buffalograss lawns for removal of thatch and overall vigor.
- Fertilize zoysia & bermudagrass lawns with high nitrogen fertilizer such as 27-3-3 or 46-0-0.
- Check for bagworms and control as needed.
- Prune hedges as needed to maintain shape.
- Fertilize houseplants throughout the summer months to encourage growth.

## Vegetables:

### **Mulch Tomato Plants Mid-June:**

While mulching is a beneficial practice for most plants, heavily mulching warm season vegetables, such as tomatoes, in the early growing season can limit plant growth. This is especially true in springs with consistently wet soils. For tomatoes and many other warm season vegetables, a delay in mulch applications may be beneficial to allow the soils to warm up sufficiently for healthy root growth.

Tomato plants need a soil temperature of at least 60°F to grow well. In fact, for tomatoes soil temperatures near 77°F are ideal for optimal nutrient and water uptake. Now that average soil temperatures are consistently above 65°F to 70°F across Kansas, and nearing averages in the mid-70's, it is an important time to consider mulching tomato plants.

Mulching tomatoes in mid-June offers many benefits. Tomatoes prefer even levels of soil moisture, and mulches help conserve soil moisture by limiting excessive water evaporation from the ground. Mulches also help to insulate the soil, moderating soil temperatures closer to ideal growing conditions during the heat of the day. Mulch is also effective in suppressing weeds, which compete with tomatoes for soil moisture and nutrients. In addition, mulching helps to limit the spread of soil borne disease and protects the soil surface from compaction and soil crusting.



There are many types of mulches that can be applied to tomato plants. Hay and straw mulches are very popular for tomatoes, but may contain weed or volunteer grain seeds. Shredded leaves, cottonseed hulls, compost, and cocoa hulls are also common mulches used in the vegetable garden. Grass clippings can also be used but should be applied as a thin layer – only 2 to 3 inches thick. Grass clippings should also be dry when applied as mulch, as wet clippings can mold, harden, and make it difficult for water to pass through. Be sure not to use clippings from any lawns that have been treated with a weed killer or other herbicides. Most weed killers applied to lawns require at least three to four mowings before clippings are safe to collect for mulch. The grass clippings from any lawn exposed to products containing quinclorac (common weed killer used for crabgrass control) should not be used as mulch.

## Fruit:

### **Fruit Tree Reminders:**

To maximize the yield of your fruit trees this summer, here are a few important maintenance reminders:

- Thin fruit on apple and peach trees. Fruit should be 6-8 inches apart.
- Remove suckers from the base of fruit trees and grape vines.
- Water as needed. During hot weather, 1- inch of water per week is the recommendation.
- Comb or position grapevine shoots to prevent tangling and promote more uniform sun exposure.
- Follow disease and pest management protocol. For more information about fruit sprays see our extension publication: [Spray Guide for Growing Stone Fruit at Home](#)

## Flowers:

### **Pinching Mums One Last Time Before July 4th:**



Many garden perennials benefit from a simple technique called pinching or heading back. This process encourages lateral buds to develop, resulting in a shorter, sturdier and fuller plant. Chrysanthemums, Autumn Joy Sedum, Asters, Goldenrod, Joe Pye Weed, and Yarrow are all great examples of plants that benefit from pinching back.

While pinching back can be accomplished one to three times per year on most of these perennial plants in Kansas, the last pinch should take place before July 4th, in order to allow adequate time for flower development. Otherwise, flower development may be delayed and blooms may be killed off by early frosts before flowering is complete.

Pinch back these perennials by removing the top inch of growth, using your thumbnail and forefinger to pinch off new growth. A pair of pruners, scissors, or hedge shears could also be used. When pinching, never remove more than one-third of the overall height of the plant at one time.

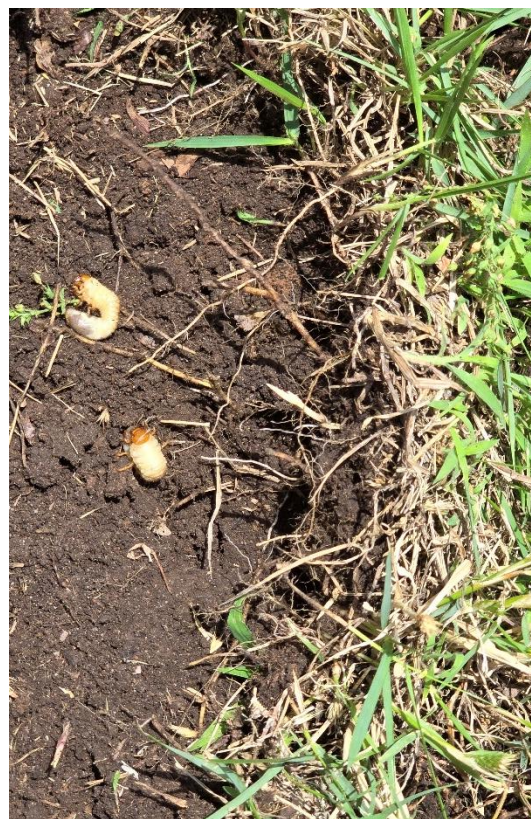
Check out this [Kansas Healthy Yards video on pinching mums](https://kansashealthyyards.org/all-videos/video/how-to-grow-big-bushy-annuals) for more information:  
<https://kansashealthyyards.org/all-videos/video/how-to-grow-big-bushy-annuals>

## Turf:

### **Preventative Grub Control In Kansas:**

There are several insects in Kansas that produce grubs as their larval stage, and most all these grubs commonly feed on turfgrass roots as a primary food source during the grub stage. Larvae of the Southern Masked Chafers, Japanese Beetles and several species of May Beetles/June Bugs are all common grubs found in Kansas. While the lifecycle of each insect varies (Masked chafers and Japanese beetles have a one-year lifecycle, and May/June beetles have a three-year lifecycle), they have a similar appearance as grubs and cause identical damage to turfgrass.

When identifying grub damage to lawns, symptoms include wilted grass, thinned stands, yellowed or browned areas, and dead spots. Many other environmental problems, diseases, and improper care practices can cause similar appearance, so digging down to the root system of the turf is important to confirm the presence of grubs. Grub damaged lawns often peel back, lift up, or turf pulls back easily when severe grub damage has separated the turfgrass roots from the soil. Usually, this damage is most obvious in the fall, beginning mid to late September.





Grub damage can be managed in one of two ways: preventatively, or with rescue treatments when grubs are most actively feeding. For lawns with a history of grub activity and damage, now is the time to consider taking preventative measures.

Lawns that have had a history of grub damage can be treated with an insecticide containing the active ingredient imidacloprid before the young grubs hatch. These products are usually applied from late June to early July but can be applied as early as May. Imidacloprid works by interfering with the transmission of nerve impulses in insects and has a low toxicity rating for humans and pets. Be sure to read and follow the directions on the label, including guidance on watering in the product after application.

Remember, all preventative insecticides should be applied at least four to six weeks before grub eggs hatch to ensure insecticide residues are present to kill young grubs.

Visit our [Grub Management in Turfgrass Using Insecticides publication](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/grub-management-in-turfgrass-using-insecticides_MF3439.pdf) for more information about the lifecycle and control of grubs: [https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/grub-management-in-turfgrass-using-insecticides\\_MF3439.pdf](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/grub-management-in-turfgrass-using-insecticides_MF3439.pdf)

## Trees & Shrubs:

### **Evaluate And Remove Staking On Trees:**

Staking is not always a required practice when planting new trees and shrubs. The purpose of staking or guying is to prevent movement of the root system and lower trunk. This is because movement in the top of the tree is desirable, and will strengthen the tree more quickly.

There are times and situations when the benefits of staking outweigh the disadvantages. In these cases, trees should be staked as low as possible on the tree trunk to anchor the root ball and prevent damage to new roots as they establish.

If young trees are staked, the trees must be checked monthly during the growing season and after storms or strong wind. The staking system should be snug, but not to the point of making an impression or indentation on the trunk or branches.

Expanded trunk growth will be most noticeable in the early summer and late fall, after the tree undergoes its early spring and late summer flushes of growth. When that happens, loosen the tie or wire around the trunk.

Do not stake a tree any longer than necessary. Stakes should be removed after one growing season, but may remain in place for a second season only if additional support is required.

After removing the staking system, check the tree's stability. If the root system or ground around the roots still move when the trunk is moved, or if the trunk bends excessively, loosely reattach the staking for one more growing season. Remember to reevaluate the staking regularly until the stakes are safe to remove.



## Miscellaneous:

### Updates To The Noxious Weed List of Kansas:

In the landscape we all experience difficult to control weeds. Some spread rapidly, some produce countless seeds, and are just persistent in our attempts to control them. Some of these aggressive plants may be native to our state, others may be introduced from other parts of the world. Of all the plants that may be considered weeds in our property, 16 plants hold a special designation as a “noxious weed” in Kansas.

A noxious weed, simply defined, is a weed considered harmful (to the environment, public health, animals, agriculture, recreation, wildlife etc.) and is designated by law as a plant that is subject to legal regulations to control it. In Kansas there are 16 weeds designated by law as noxious weeds, 5 of which were added to the list in May of 2026.

Special attention is given to controlling noxious weeds because they can displace native plant species, may interfere with agricultural crop production, intensify erosion, damage wildlife habitat and decrease property values. As a result, Kansas law requires all people to control the spread of any noxious weed and eradicate it on land in which they manage (either private or public) by using an official control method. Control methods must prevent both the production of seed and destroy the plant’s ability to reproduce by vegetative means.

Written into Kansas law, noxious weeds are categorized into three groups. The first group is weeds that are generally not found in the state or have limited distribution throughout the state (Category A Weeds). The goal is to eradicate these weeds to prevent establishment in Kansas. The next group of weeds are established in scattered populations around the state (Category B Weeds). The goal is to prevent further spread of these weeds. The last group of weeds are well-established in Kansas, often state-wide in large population (Category C Weeds). These weeds should be managed to minimize their negative impacts.

 **Kansas' Noxious Weeds**  
Kansas Department of Agriculture  
Plant Protection and Weed Control  
1320 Research Park Drive  
Manhattan, KS 66502  
785-564-6698  
agriculture.ks.gov/NoxiousWeeds

**Category A**

 Leafy Spurge ( <i>Euphorbia virgate</i> )	 Hoary Cress ( <i>Lepidium draba</i> L.)	 Quackgrass ( <i>Elymus repens</i> )	 Kudzu ( <i>Pueraria montana</i> var. <i>lobata</i> )	 Russian Knapweed ( <i>Rhaponticum repens</i> )	 Spotted Knapweed ( <i>Centaurea stoebe</i> )	 Diffuse Knapweed ( <i>Centaurea diffusa</i> )
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**Category B**

 Canada Thistle ( <i>Cirsium arvense</i> )	 Common Teasel ( <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i> )	 Cutleaf Teasel ( <i>Dipsacus laciniatus</i> )
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**Category C**

 Field Bindweed ( <i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> )	 Sericea Lespedeza ( <i>Lespedeza cuneata</i> )	 Amur Honeysuckle ( <i>Lonicera maackii</i> )
 Musk Thistle ( <i>Carduus nutans</i> )	 Johnsongrass ( <i>Sorghum halepense</i> )	 Bur Ragweed ( <i>Ambrosia grayii</i> )

  
Click on QR Code to learn more about Kansas noxious weeds.

**Category A:** Limited distribution in Kansas, subject to active eradication to prevent establishment.

**Category B:** Discrete distributions in Kansas, subject to control wherever established and subject to active eradication wherever not established.

**Category C:** Well-established in larger populations in Kansas. New populations subject to control efforts and established populations shall be managed by approved control methods.

When changes went into effect in May 2026 to the Kansas noxious weed law, the following changes were made. Diffuse Knapweed, Spotted Knapweed, Common Teasel, Cutleaf Teasel, and Amur Honeysuckle were all added to the Noxious Weed list. Pignut was removed from the list of noxious weeds. With these changes, the state hopes to control these weeds before they become a problem statewide.

The full list of noxious weeds in Kansas now includes (grouped by category):

- Category A Weeds (found infrequently):
  - [Diffuse Knapweed](#) (*Centaurea diffusa* Lam.)
  - [Hoary Cress](#) (*Cardaria draba*)
  - [Kudzu](#) (*Pueraria montana* var. *lobata*)
  - [Leafy Spurge](#) (*Euphorbia virgate*)
  - [Quackgrass](#) (*Agropyron repens*)
  - [Russian Knapweed](#) (*Rhaponticum repens*)
  - [Spotted Knapweed](#) (*Centaurea stoebe* L.)
- Category B Weeds (found in scattered populations):
  - [Canada Thistle](#) (*Cirsium arvense*)
  - [Common Teasel](#) (*Dipsacus fullonum* L.)
  - [Cutleaf Teasel](#) (*Dipsacus laciniatus* L.)
- Category C Weeds (found commonly state-wide):
  - [Amur Honeysuckle](#) (*Lonicera Maackii* (Rupr.) Maxim.)
  - [Bur Ragweed](#) (*Ambrosia grayii*)
  - [Field Bindweed](#) (*Convolvulus arvensis*)
  - [Johnsongrass](#) (*Sorghum halepence*)
  - [Musk Thistle](#) (*Carduus nutans*)
  - [Sericea Lespedeza](#) (*Lespedeza cuneata*)

Weeds in all three categories must be eradicated wherever detected and actively managed to protect from spreading into other land areas across the state.



In addition, individual counties can declare other plant species as noxious weeds in their specific county. Caucasian Bluestem (*Bothriochloa bladhii*) and Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) are two plants commonly identified as noxious on a county by county basis. Check with your [local County Weed Department](#) to find out if any other species have been designated as noxious in your county, or for assistance in noxious weed control.

[Visit the Kansas Department of Agriculture's website](#) to learn more about noxious weeds of Kansas:  
<https://www.agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/plant-protection-weed-control/noxious-weed-control-program>

**Contributors:**

Matthew McKernan, Consumer Horticulture Extension Associate

*For questions or additional information, contact: [hortsupport@ksu.edu](mailto:hortsupport@ksu.edu)*

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