



Horticulture Newsletter

June 9, 2026

**KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Horticulture and
Natural Resources

Video of the Week:



The Eastern Mole is a small mammal that feeds on underground insects and invertebrates. While in search of food, moles can create large amounts of underground tunneling, which can damage lawns and landscapes. To control mole damage, trapping is the most effective solution. [This week's video discusses how to trap moles](#) in order to prevent plant damage in your lawns and flowerbeds: <https://www.wildlife.k-state.edu/species/moles/>

Announcements:

Garden Tours Continue Across Kansas:

If you had an opportunity to attend the Garden Tours in Saline or Sedgwick Counties this past weekend, you were likely inspired by the creativity and beauty of the gardens on tour. If you haven't had a chance to attend a garden tour yet, join us this weekend in Barton, Ellis, Reno, and Johnson counties to explore more unique private gardens in Kansas. Visit with passionate gardeners, discover new plants, and gain inspiration for your own garden. Be sure to visit with the Extension Master Gardener Volunteers to have your gardening questions answered. [See the full list of Garden Tours in Kansas and their respective dates online](#), at the bottom of our website: <https://extension.k-state.edu/master-gardener/explore-locally/gardens.html>

2026 Garden Tour Locations



Garden Calendar:

- Plant another crop of sweet corn and green beans to extend the harvest.

- Harvest radish and turnips soon, if not already completed. Overmature plants may develop harsh flavors and undesirable textures.
- Mulch vegetable garden crops for moisture conservation and weed control.
- Deadhead spent rose blossoms.
- Pinch chrysanthemums, asters, and other fall blooming flowers for development of a bushy plant with increased flowers.
- Raise mowing height on tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass lawns between 3" to 4" for summer heat resistance and increased drought tolerance.
- Check lawnmower blades for sharpness. Sharpen blades as needed.
- Water newly planted and young trees and shrubs as needed. Most young trees and shrubs will benefit from at least 10 gallons of water per week during the summer months.
- Prune and shape houseplants for improved aesthetic beauty.

Vegetables:

Fertilizing Tomato Plants:

For healthy tomato plant growth with maximum yields, tomato plants should be fertilized at planting and then several times throughout the growing season. To maximize the number of tomatoes produced by a plant, research shows that tomatoes benefit from additional applications (sidedressings) of nitrogen fertilizer at very specific times during the growing season.

The first fertilizer application should be applied when the tomato fruits reach full size but are still green, usually one to two weeks prior to fruit ripening. Two weeks after the first fruits are ripened and harvested, it is time for the second fertilizer application. The third round of fertilizer should be applied one month after the second. Basically, there should be one month of time between each application.

Do not over fertilize tomatoes. Fertilizing more often than this often encourages excess leaf growth at the expense of fruit production.

The following products are some of the common sources of nitrogen fertilizers. Apply only one of the fertilizers listed below at the rate provided on the bag:

- Nitrate of soda (16-0-0): 2/3-pound (1.5 cups) fertilizer per 30 feet of row
- Ammonium Sulfate (21-0-0): 0.5 pounds (1 cup) fertilizer per 30 feet of row
- Urea (46-0-0): 4 ounces (1/2 cup) fertilizer per 30 feet of row
- Blood meal (12-0-0): 14 ounces (1.75 cups) fertilizer per 30 feet of row

Alternatively, lawn fertilizers that do not contain weed killer/preventer, can be also used at a rate of 1/3 pound (¾ cup) fertilizer per 30 feet of row. Choose a fertilizer that is ~30% nitrogen (first number of three on the bag).



Always follow the recommendations of a soil test for the best recommendations specific to your garden soil. Keep in mind that tomatoes grown on sandy soil may require additional fertilization. [Visit our Tomatoes publication](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/tomatoes_MF312.pdf) for more information on fertilizing and growing tomatoes in Kansas: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/tomatoes_MF312.pdf

Fruit:

Reasons Fruit Trees Fail To Bear Fruit:



Although it may be a few more weeks before cherries are ready to harvest, and more than a month or two away from harvesting peaches, apples, or pears, you're likely to see fruit developing and gaining in size on your fruit trees. However, if your fruit trees are missing small fruit that are beginning to develop, it's important to evaluate your tree and understand why.

While there are many reasons why a healthy-looking fruit tree may produce little to no fruit, many of the reasons can be corrected with the proper planning, maintenance, and care. Here are the most common issues why fruit trees fail to bear fruit in Kansas:

- **Age of the tree:** Young fruit trees often need several years to mature before they are ready to bear fruit. The time from planting to fruit bearing varies depending on growing conditions and type of fruit. Apples, apricots, and peaches commonly grow 2 to 5 years before producing fruit, while pears, plums and cherries may need as many as 3 to 7 years.
- **Extreme Weather Conditions:** Many weather patterns, from extremely cold winter temperatures to late spring freezes can damage blossoms and kill flower buds. This year, many fruit tree flowers were damaged by late spring freezes.
- **Poor Pollination:** If the fruit tree bloomed heavily and wasn't affected by weather, take into account if adequate pollination occurred. This not only requires pollinator insects to complete the process, but an adequate number of trees in close proximity. Many fruit trees, including apple, pear, sweet cherry, Japanese plum, and American plum, require pollen from multiple different cultivars for proper pollination. This requires growing several compatible cultivars close by for adequate pollination.
- **Over Fertilization or Excessive Pruning:** Both of these practices can stimulate excess growth in fruit trees, which limits flower bud formation and fruit set. More than 30 inches of new growth on a fruit tree in one growing season indicates excess growth. Reduce or stop fertilization if bearing fruit trees produce more than 12 to 24 inches of new shoot growth during the growing season.
- **Lack of Pruning & Tree Structure:** While over pruning can be damaging, insufficient pruning can also reduce fruit yield. Without pruning, an increased number of limbs, branches, and shoots develop in the tree canopy, which shades out fruit buds. Ideally branches should be trained to form an angle of about 60 degrees with the trunk.

- **Biennial Fruit Bearing:** Certain fruit trees, such as apples, often bear fruit heavily one year and sparsely the next. To offset this, fruit thinning and proper pruning should be practiced on an annual basis to encourage more consistent harvests.

For more information about these, and other reasons why fruit trees may not have fruit, [visit our Why Fruit Trees Fail to Bear Fruit publication: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/why-fruit-trees-fail-to-bear-fruit_MF2166.pdf](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/why-fruit-trees-fail-to-bear-fruit_MF2166.pdf)

Flowers:

Look For Black Spot Disease On Rose Leaves:



Rose black spot (*Diplocarpon rosae*) is one of the most common and damaging fungal diseases of roses in Kansas. It is most active during warm, wet weather, especially in late spring and early fall. While rose black spot does not kill the plant immediately, over time repeated infestations can result in severe defoliations and predispose the plant to other stresses, insects, and winter damage.

Symptoms usually begin as dark brown to black spots on the upper leaf surface, often with feathery or irregular margins. The disease typically starts on lower leaves of the plant and moves upward through the foliage as the season progresses. Spots range in size from 1/16 to 1/2 inch in diameter. Infected leaves often turn yellow and drop, and severe infections can leave plants heavily defoliated.

The fungus survives mainly in infected leaf litter and on diseased canes, then in the spring, fungal spores are windblown or splashed up on to newly emerging leaves by water droplets. Rain and overhead irrigation help splash spores up through the canopy of the plant.

To reduce problems, start by selecting resistant cultivars whenever possible. Plant roses in areas of full sun with good air circulation. Avoid wetting foliage when irrigating and avoid watering in the evening hours. Always clean up fallen leaves and leaf litter, and prune out diseased canes to help reduce the amount of overwintering fungus. When diseased leaves are first discovered on the plant, remove leaves by hand and dispose of them. In addition, fungicide applications can be made at 7- to 14-day intervals starting at the first sign of disease to prevent further infection.

[Visit our Rose Black Spot fact sheet](https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/common-pest-problems/documents/Rose%20Blackspot.pdf) for more information about this disease and its control: <https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/common-pest-problems/documents/Rose%20Blackspot.pdf>



Trees & Shrubs:

Selecting The Right Bagworm Control:

Bagworms are currently active and feeding on plants across Kansas. They commonly feed on evergreens and plants in the rose family. Bagworms are an insect caterpillar pest that can consume large amounts of plant material in a short period of time.

Young bagworm caterpillars typically emerge (eclose) from eggs from mid-May to mid-June in Kansas. However, emergence varies every year, and is contingent on weather conditions. This year

(2026), bagworm caterpillars have emerged (eclosed) from eggs as early as mid-April. After emergence, the caterpillar creates a silken bag they carry with them when feeding. As they develop, they add plant material to the bag, which provides camouflage and protection from predators (both invertebrate and vertebrate). The bags vary in appearance depending on the plant fed upon. By late summer, the bags are 1 to 2 inches long and noticeable hanging from trees and shrubs. In August, bagworms cease feeding and attach the bags to branches. Males become winged moths that emerge from the bottom of the bag (you will notice a brown papery case) and fly to female bags. The male and female mate and then the male dies. Female bagworms remain in the bags and produce between 500 to 1,000 eggs, which is how they overwinter.



As bagworms develop throughout the summer months, they increase in size, which enhances their potential to cause plant damage. The strategies to manage bagworm populations include hand removal and applying insecticides. Hand remove bags and place them into a container of soapy water to kill the caterpillars. Although effective, the strategy is not practical when dealing with bagworms that have infested large trees or windbreaks. In these cases, insecticides may be needed to prevent or minimize bagworm caterpillar feeding damage. However, bagworm caterpillars must be actively feeding for insecticides to be effective in managing bagworm populations below plant damaging levels.

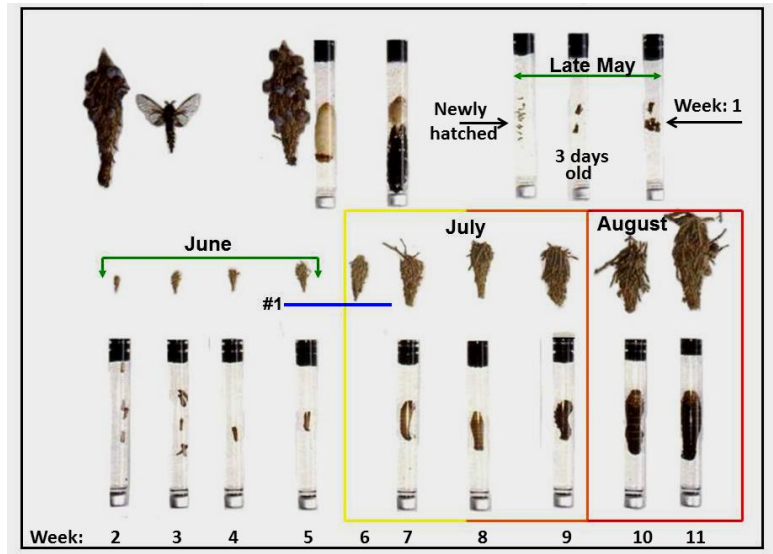
As bagworms grow, the insecticides used for managing bagworm populations must also change. To select the appropriate insecticide, it is important to determine the size of the bags when insecticides are applied:

- **If bagworm bags are 1/8 to 1/4 of an inch in length:** use selective insecticides with the following active ingredients: *Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *kurstaki* (*Btk*) or spinosad. Products containing these active ingredients will require repeat applications every 7 to 10 days for up to four weeks. These are usually applied from mid-May to mid-June in Kansas, while bagworms are small. These selective insecticides will be more environmentally friendly to beneficial insects and pollinators, but not as effective against larger sized bagworms.
- **If bagworm bags are 1/2 of an inch in length or larger:** a general, broad-spectrum insecticide will need to be applied. These insecticides are not selective, however, and may pose a greater risk to beneficial insects and pollinators, including honeybees and bumble bees. Consequently, make applications when pollinators are not active, which would be early morning or late evening. Use broad-spectrum insecticides with the following active ingredients: malathion, acephate, cyfluthrin, bifenthrin, or permethrin. Insecticides with these active ingredients generally require one or two

applications per year and are usually applied from late-June to late-July. These insecticides must be applied before bagworms cease feeding in the fall.

When using insecticides to manage bagworm populations, it is also important to remember:

- Timing of application depends on what insecticide product you select and how frequently you plan to spray. If you spray only one or two times, use a broad-spectrum insecticide after all the bagworm caterpillars have emerged from the eggs. If you plan to spray multiple times, use selective insecticides that have a lower risk of harming beneficial insects and pollinators.
- The selective insecticides recommended for use against bagworms must be ingested by the caterpillar to be effective. This is why bagworms must be actively feeding for the insecticide to kill them. The non-selective insecticides recommended for use against bagworms work by contact, so bagworms must be outside the bag for the insecticide to contact the caterpillars. In all cases, thorough coverage of plant parts, such as leaves is important to ensure the effectiveness of the insecticide application.



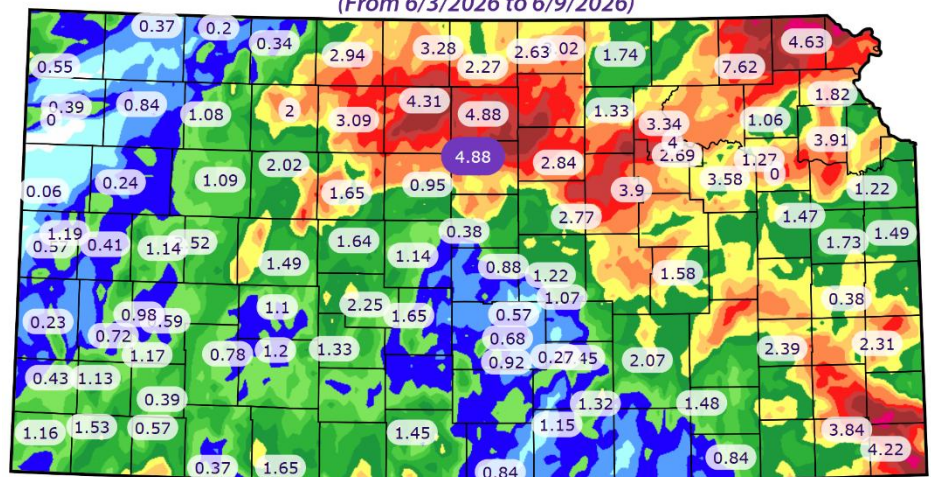
- Prioritize treating for bagworms on evergreen plants. Most deciduous trees and shrubs can tolerate bagworm feeding damage because they produce new growth each year. Evergreens, however, may be killed by extensive bagworm feeding because they retain their needles/leaves for multiple years.

Visit the [Bagworm - Insect Pest of Trees and Shrubs](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/bagworm-insect-pest-of-trees-and-shrubs_MF3474) publication for more information on bagworms and their control: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/bagworm-insect-pest-of-trees-and-shrubs_MF3474

Miscellaneous:

7 Day Rainfall Totals

(From 6/3/2026 to 6/9/2026)



Mesonet Data - Precip (in) at Jun 09 2026 10:25 (CDT)

Flooding & Storm Damage:

Most of Kansas has received some much needed rainfall over the past 7 to 14 days. One of the challenges with rainfall, however, is that too much of a good thing can be just as damaging as not enough rainfall. While most of Kansas has not experienced significant flooding, flooding has occurred in some areas of heavy, localized rainfall.

When flooding occurs, waterlogged

soils push out oxygen that roots need to survive. It surprises many people to learn that every living cell in a plant must have oxygen to live, including roots down deep in the soil. Without oxygen, plant cells begin to die. Even more interesting are the various mechanisms that some plants use to provide oxygen to the roots, even under saturated or flooded conditions. Unfortunately, most of our vegetables and flowers do not have such adaptations. The longer these plants are subjected to saturated soils, the more likely damage will occur.

Usually, as long as water drains away within 24 hours, the impact of flooding on plant health is minimal. However, shallow, stagnant water under hot, sunny conditions can cook small plants, reducing survival time to as little as a few hours.

For vegetable and fruit crops, food safety also needs to be taken into consideration when evaluating flood damage. When food crop gardens are flooded with water contaminated with sewage (lagoon) or animal manure, produce should be discarded as the contamination risks can be very dangerous. The safest approach is to discard all garden crops that have been in contact with flood waters, especially leafy green vegetables and fruit that contacted the water.

Late season crops that develop after floodwaters have receded may be safe to eat, but the grower must evaluate the potential contaminants of the water. Discard any fruit that is cracked or soft that develops after the waters have subsided from crops such as tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, sweet corn, squash, cucumbers, and similar vegetables. Always wash vegetables thoroughly before eating. When deciding the safety of consuming edible plants grown in flooded areas, the [US Food and Drug Administration provides additional food safety guidelines](#).



For most plants, standing water should not cause a food safety problem as long as the aboveground portions of the plant remain healthy and produce did not contact flood waters. Do not use produce from plants that have yellowed. With young crops, early in the growing season it may be best to replant if symptoms of stress appear, such as stunted growth and discoloration.

After flood waters recede, provide additional care for plants impacted by flood waters, especially trees and shrubs. Flooding damages the roots of plants, making the root system less efficient in using available water in the soil. When the weather turns dry, timely waterings are critical to a plant's recovery. Provide deep, periodic waterings to help support water uptake from compromised root systems. Soils can often become compacted and crusted after heavy rainfall, further restricting oxygen to the roots. Lightly scraping the soil to break this crust will help maintain a healthy root system. Be careful not to cultivate too deeply as shallow roots may be damaged. Aerating lawns and around trees can also help oxygen to better reach plant roots.

If trees or shrubs were damaged in recent storms, review our [past Horticulture Newsletter article on Cleaning Up Tree Damage](https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/horticulture-newsletter/documents/2026/may2026/Horticulture_Newsletter_May-26-2026.pdf#page=5): https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/horticulture-resource-center/horticulture-newsletter/documents/2026/may2026/Horticulture_Newsletter_May-26-2026.pdf#page=5

Be Bed Bug Aware!

As Bed Bug Awareness Week (June 7-13) is being promoted by the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) and the Professional Pest Management Alliance (PPMA), now is a good time to educate yourself to be bed bug aware. Here are 5 things you should know about bed bugs:

1. Bed bugs can live anywhere humans frequent.

Bed bugs prefer indoor conditions with relatively stable temperatures and easy access to blood meals from humans or warm-blooded hosts. Typical hiding locations indoors include: beds, bedding, furniture, clothing, walls, floors, luggage,

electrical outlets, and behind wall hangings. Most people tend to think of bed bugs as an issue in hotels or locations where humans sleep, but they can thrive in single-family houses, apartments, hospitals, college dorm rooms, office buildings, schools, buses, movie theaters, libraries, buses, cruise ships, and retail stores and just about anywhere that human activity occurs.

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2. Bed bugs could have a degree in anesthesiology. People often wonder why they do not feel bed bugs biting them. The saliva produced by bed bugs contains an anesthetic and promotes increased blood flow at the bite site allowing the feeding process to be quick and painless.

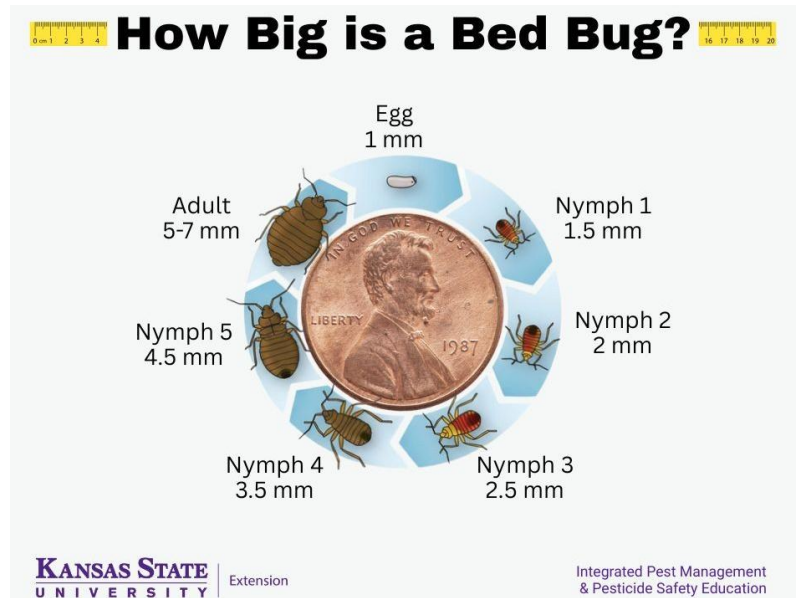
3. Bed bugs can live for several months without a blood meal. Adult bed bugs can live two to five months without a blood meal under average room conditions, making them extremely resilient pests. This fact means you cannot simply leave a room vacant to eliminate an infestation. Nymphs require blood to molt and progress through their developmental stages, so they typically can only survive a few weeks without feeding.

4. Bed bugs do not transmit diseases to humans. It is interesting to note that bed bugs can carry over 40 pathogens, like MRSA, Chagas and Hepatitis B, but that does not mean they transmit these pathogens to humans. Luckily, bed bug mouthparts are not structured to transmit pathogens to the bloodstream. Their intermittent piercing and sucking feeding behavior limits the possibility of pathogen transmission between hosts. The health concerns related to bed bug infestations include allergic reactions, skin infections from scratching, and psychological distress.

5. The average cost to exterminate bed bugs can be high. To exterminate bed bugs, professionals must



inspect every potential hiding spot and apply treatments to multiple zones or locations in the home. The cost for control might seem high, but it reflects the complexity, amount of time required, and the specialized methods that are required to eliminate bed bugs. People will find a wide variety of do it yourself products in stores that say they control bed bugs, but this is a pest that really requires professional services to obtain eradication.



To prevent bed bugs from becoming an issue in the first place, remember these smart home and travel habits. Inspect all furniture, mattresses, box springs, and bed frames for bed bugs before allowing these items into your home. Do not store backpacks, purses, or bags on beds, couches or other resting areas. Do not put guests' coats or bags on your beds. Clean out a front closet to store these items for your guests. When traveling leave your luggage on the bathroom counter because bed bugs rarely inhabit bathroom tiles or porcelain. When returning home, unpack your clothes directly into the washer using high heat. Clean any luggage and store it away from the bed.

Visit our [Bed Bugs – Structural Pests publication](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/bed-bugs-structural-pests_MF2926.pdf) to learn more about bed bugs and how to protect your home: https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/bed-bugs-structural-pests_MF2926.pdf

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