Help the Shawnee County Master Gardeners Build a Greenhouse!

It's time to vote...and vote often. The Shawnee County Extension Master Gardeners have been accepted as a candidate for the Pepsi Refresh Project Grant opportunity. It is solely based on democratic voting. We are seeking a $250K grant called "Build a Master Gardener Demonstration/Education Greenhouse". Voting continues from October 1 through October 31. You may vote 3 times each day: at www.Pepsi.com website, on your Facebook account (search "Pepsi Refresh" and go to the Refresh application), and by texting 103438 to 73774. A quick link to our project is www.snco.us/greenhouse
Details of the project can be seen here as well. Watch for updates on our status. Thanks for your vote!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Kansas Turfgrass Conference

The 60th Annual Kansas Turfgrass Conference will be held December 7, 8 and 9, 2010, at the Kansas Expocentre, Topeka. The conference is an excellent way to learn about turf and landscape management, visit with old friends, network with new ones, place orders with and see all the latest and greatest equipment and supplies from local and national vendors. Sessions include Basic Turfgrass, Insect Management, Pesticide Applicator Core Hour and Weed Management, Managing Summer Stress, Trees, Flowers and Shrubs, Irrigation, Sports Turf, Water Management and more.

The conference has been approved for commercial recertification credit as follows:

1 Core Hour
3A - 5.5 hours
3B - 9 hours

GCSAA education points and International Society of Arboriculture CEUs can also be earned by attending this conference.

To download a copy of the brochure and registration information, go to http://www.kansasturfgrassfoundation.org/Conference.html

Great Plains Growers Conference

The Great Plains Growers Conference, a conference for seasoned and beginning vegetable and fruit growers will be held January 5-8, 2011, at Missouri Western State University, St. Joseph, Mo.
This year two already great conferences will be combined into one – The Great Plains Vegetable and Mid-America Fruit Growers conferences.

Here's this year's conference preliminary schedule:

**January 5**
* Fruit Growers Tour
* Banquet dinner

**January 6**
* High Tunnel Production Workshop
* Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Mini-School
* Farming Smarter, Not Harder
* Fruit Growers Workshop

**January 7-8**
* Beginning Grower
* Farmers' Market
* Small Fruit
* Agritourism
* Irrigation Practices
* Organic Production
* Cut Flower
* Vegetable Production
......and much more.

Trade Show (Jan. 6 - 8): Fruit and vegetable exhibitors with information about seeds, irrigation, equipment, chemicals and many other products.

For more information go to [http://www.greatplainsgrowers.org](http://www.greatplainsgrowers.org)

**VEGETABLES**

**Last Tomatoes of the Season**

Cold nights are increasing in frequency hinting at frosts yet to come. If you have tomatoes, you may have some that are approaching maturity. Leave them on the vine until mature or until a frost is forecast. Tomatoes will ripen off the vine but must have reached a certain phase of maturity called the 'mature green stage.' These tomatoes are mature enough to harvest though not yet red. Look for full-sized tomatoes with a white, star-shaped zone at the bottom end of the fruit.
When harvesting fruit before a frost, separate tomatoes into three groups for storage: those that are mostly red, those that are just starting to turn, and those that are still green. Discard tomatoes with defects such as rots or breaks in the skin. Place the tomatoes on cardboard trays or cartons but use layers of newspaper to separate fruit if stacked. Occasionally a tomato may start to rot and leak juice. The newspaper will keep the juice from contacting nearby or underlying fruit. Store groups of tomatoes at as close to 55 degrees as possible until needed. (WU)

**Work Garden Soil in the Fall**

Fall is the preferred time to prepare garden soil for next spring’s vegetable garden. Spring is often wet making it difficult to work soil without forming clods that remain the rest of the season. Fall usually is drier allowing more time to work the soil when it is at the correct soil moisture content. Even if you work soil wet in the fall and form clods, the freezing and thawing that takes place in the winter will break them down, leaving a mellow soil the following spring.

Insects often hide in garden debris. If that debris is worked into the soil, insects will be less likely to survive the winter. Diseases are also less likely to overwinter if old plants are worked under. Also, the garden debris will increase the organic matter content of the soil. Working the debris into the soil is often easier if you mow the old vegetable plants several times to reduce the size of the debris.

Fall is an excellent time to add organic matter. Not only are organic materials usually more available in the fall (leaves, rotten hay or silage, grass clippings) but fresher materials can be added in the fall than in the spring because there is more time for them to break down before planting. As a general rule, add 2 inches of organic material to the surface of the soil and till it in. Be careful not to overtill. You should end up with particles like grape nuts or larger. If you work your garden into the consistency of dust, you have destroyed the soil structure. (WU)

**TURFGRASS**

**Japanese Clover – Common Lespedeza**

This may be “the summer of strange weeds.” I took some pictures of a strange weed a few weeks ago when I came across Dr. Nick Christians’ post about finding some bellflower in Ames. It turned out to be Common lespedeza, also known as Japanese clover, (Kummerowia striata syn. Lespedeza striata).

After finding it at the research center in Olathe, I’ve seen it all over and received several calls about it from all over the state.
It looks a lot like miniature clover, except the flower is purple and white and resembles a very small iris flower. Common lespedeza can be confused with Black Medic, but the small spur at the tip of each leaflet and yellow flowers of black medic help distinguish the two weeds from each other.

It is a summer annual, which means it germinated from seed in the spring, flowers in the summer, and dies in the fall with frost.

If you Google (or Bing) common lespedeza, you will find many articles talking about using it for forage. Apparently, it was used commonly for forage pastures up until the 1950s. I even found one article over at ESPN taking about planting it for forage for deer. I also found a K-State Research and Extension publication from 1941.

Arkansas has a nice publication about control of it in zoysia. Basically, they found 2,4-D offered only moderate control, but herbicides containing triclopyr (Turflon Ester) and fluroxypyr were the most effective control. NC-State has the same recommendations, calling this a difficult summer annual to control.

http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/pests/weeds/hgic2322.html lists several three-way herbicides for controlling common lespedeza. (RSJ)

FLOWERS

Amaryllis, Bringing it Back Into Bloom

With proper care, amaryllis will bloom year after year. Bring the pot in before the first frost and place in a dark location. Withhold water so leaves have a chance to dry completely. Then cut them off close to the top of the bulb. Amaryllis needs to rest for at least a month before the plant is prompted to grow. It takes an additional six to eight weeks for the plant to flower.

When you are ready for amaryllis to resume growth, water thoroughly and place the plant in a warm, sunny location. Do not water again until the roots are well developed because bulb rot is a concern. Amaryllis needs temperatures between 50 and 60 degrees during the period before flowering. Higher temperatures can weaken leaves. The flower bud may start to appear right away or the plant may remain dormant for a period of time, but eventually all mature bulbs do bloom if they have been given proper care during the growing season. Keep the plant in a cool location and out of direct sunlight when the flower buds begin to show color so flowers last longer. Amaryllis can remain in bloom for about a month. (WU)
PESTS

Autumn Home Invaders

We are starting to see and hear about some of the annual household invaders. These include crickets, boxelder bugs, millipedes, and especially the multicolored Asian lady beetle. They typically try to invade homes this time of year looking for a shelter to survive the winter. These pests are only a nuisance. They pose no threat to health or property, but when significant numbers build up they can be a problem.

The best way to protect your dwelling from these pests is to limit access by eliminating, or at least reducing, the points of entry. Ensure that all screens are tight fitting and intact. Make sure the caulk around windows and door frames is in good condition. Remove excess foliage and mulch from around the foundation.

Insecticides can also be effective if you treat the exterior foundation and some of the area around the outside of the building. This often reduces the number of potential household invaders. Once inside, sometimes hand-picking or vacuuming is enough to eliminate the problem. Glue boards can also be helpful to trap the invaders. However, if significant numbers do succeed in entering, an insecticide application inside the home may be required. Aerosol sprays may work quickly to eliminate pests but have short lasting effects. Insecticides with longer lasting effects can be sprayed along baseboards, in cracks, crevices, and other hidings places, and often work quite well. Always check the pesticide label to make sure the product you select is effective against the target pest and has no unwanted side effects, i.e., does not stain, leave unsightly residues, etc. (JW and HD)

False Chinch Bug Nymphs Worry Homeowners

This late summer and early fall the diagnostic lab has seen an abundance of false chinch bugs, Nysius raphanus, from lawns and coming into homes. Although sheer numbers can alarm homeowners, these bugs are harmless. They do not bite, sting, or infest households. These bugs have been around all summer, feeding on wild plants in the mustard family, but now that the vegetation they have been feeding on is drying down, they are on the move, searching for more succulent food sources. This often ends up being lawns and gardens. The nymph’s wings are not fully developed, so they have to migrate to more favorable habitats by walking. They tend to cluster together in large groups. While heavy feeding may cause small amounts of yellowing or general wilting of the plant, healthy plants can typically withstand considerable feeding pressure, and pesticides are rarely needed. (HD)
Multicolored Asian Lady Beetles

These insects deserve a little more explanation as they are considered “beneficial” insects during the growing season. But they can be serious nuisances for the next month as they aggregate for overwintering. These beetles were first imported into the United States by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the late 70s and early 80s to help with aphid control. They are very efficient aphid predators and because they have biting/chewing mouthparts they can also deliver an irritating bite to people. If enough beetles congregate inside a home they can also cause a small odor problem, may stain certain substrates when smashed, and can cause an allergic reaction in some folks. If there are significant numbers of beetles in your area this fall it probably means that aphids were plentiful in nearby crops and other plants this past summer. These beetles are primarily attracted to the south- and west-facing sides of structures that radiate/reflect the most heat. (JW and HD)

The Dark Flower Scarab Common This Year

Over the past month, the Insect Diagnostic lab has seen numerous reports of the dark flower scarab, Euphoria sepulcralis, feeding near plant and tree wounds, and even hanging around compost piles and garbage cans. This beetle is often mistaken for the Japanese beetle, but is not typically considered a harmful species in Kansas. The grubs can be found beneath dead sod or manure and the adults have been reported to feed on tree sap, many ripening fruits, and the pollen of numerous flowers. The adult beetle is about 10-14 mm long, bronze to metallic green, and has characteristic cream markings that have been described as U’s or W’s on the wing covers. (HD)

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To view Upcoming Events: http://tinyurl.com/fsqwe

Horticulture 2010 E-mail Subscription
For questions or further information contact: Hort WebMeister.

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