

Horticulture 2020 Newsletter

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

Video of the Week: [Planting a Garden](#)

KSU Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab Update

The KSU Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab continues to remain open at this time. However, we are working under limited operations and staff, so turn around may take a little longer than usual. There have been a few changes to our submission procedures. Please read the information below:

- No in-person sample delivery to lab. Instead, if you are in Manhattan please use the soil drop box located on the Northwest side of Throckmorton PSC.
- USPS sample delivery to 4032 Throckmorton PSC 1712 Claflin Rd Manhattan, KS 66506 is still available, but will be checked at a minimum of twice a week. Time sensitive samples such as Wheat should NOT use USPS and instead use the new temporary address below.

The best mailing option for samples to the plant disease diagnostic lab is BELOW. Please email us the tracking # so we know that a sample is coming to the lab.

Our NEW TEMPORARY MAILING ADDRESS for UPS/FEDEX packages
KSU Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab 1310A Westloop Pl #351 Manhattan, KS 66502

The growing season is about to kick off and we want to support Kansas growers and county extension offices. If you have questions, please contact us at clinic@ksu.edu

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TURFGRASS



Henbit and Chickweed in Lawns

The plant with the little purple flowers that have been showing up in home lawns is called henbit. If you are not sure this is what you have, check the stems. If they are square rather than round, you have henbit. A plant that also is low growing but has round stems and tiny white flowers is chickweed.

Both these plants are winter annuals and start to grow in the fall. They spend the winter as small plants and so most people do not pay much attention to them until they start to flower in the spring. Trying to kill either one at this late stage with a herbicide usually is a waste of time and money. Though plants may be burned back, they will rarely be killed. So what should you do? Remember, these are winter annuals that will die as soon as the weather turns hot. Keep the lawn mowed until nature takes its course.

However, you can do something next fall that will help next spring. Henbit and chickweed usually germinate about mid-October. Spraying with 2,4-D, Weed-B-Gon, Weed Free Zone, Weed Out, or Trimec in late October to early November can go a long way toward eliminating these plants as they are small and relatively easy to control. Choose a day that is at least 50 degrees F. These herbicides will work at temperatures below 50 degrees but the weeds are killed at a slower rate. You may also use a preemergent herbicide for lawns in late September as long as have not recently put down grass seed. Spraying with the postemergence herbicides mentioned earlier will also catch dandelions which the preemergent herbicides will miss.

Spot treating will probably be needed in the spring (March) whichever method of control you use but is more likely with the use of preemergent herbicides. Use Weed Free Zone, Speed Zone, Weed Out, Weed-B-Gon, Trimec, or one of the special henbit herbicides early in the spring before they have put on much growth. (Ward Upham)

FRUIT

Fertilizing Grapes



Year of Planting: Apply one-half cup of a 10-10-10, 12-12-12 or similar fertilizer per vine as growth begins in the spring. Repeat after one month. Fertilizers should be spread evenly from the trunk out 3 to 5 feet.

Second Year: Apply 1 cup of a 10-10-10, 12-12-12 or similar fertilizer per vine as growth begins in the spring. Fertilizers should be spread evenly from the trunk out 3 to 5 feet.

Mature Vines (3 years and older): If the soil test recommends phosphorus and potassium, use a 10-10-10, 12-12-12 or similar fertilizer at the rate of 2 cups per mature vine. Fertilizers should be spread evenly from the trunk out 3 to 5 feet.

If, however, there are adequate levels of phosphorus and potassium, add 3/4 cup of a high nitrogen fertilizer such as a 27-3-3, 29-5-4, 30-3-3 or something similar instead of the 10-10-10. Though recommended for lawns, these fertilizers will also work well as long as they do not contain weed killers or crabgrass preventers. Fertilizers should be spread evenly from the trunk out 3 to 5 feet. (Ward Upham)

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Fertilizing the Home Orchard



Fruit trees benefit from fertilization around the bloom period, but the amount needed varies with the age of the tree. Normally, trees primarily need nitrogen, so the recommendations are for a high nitrogen fertilizer such as a 27-3-3, 29-5-4, 30-3-3 or something similar. Though recommended for lawns, these fertilizers will also work well as long as they do not contain weed killers or crabgrass preventers. Use the following rates:

- Trees 1 to 2 years old, apply one-fourth cup of fertilizer per tree;
- Trees 3 to 4 years old, apply one-half cup per tree;
- Trees 5 to 10 years old, apply 1 to 2 cups per tree;
- Trees more than 10 years old, apply 2 to 3 cups.

You may also use nitrate of soda (16-0-0) but double the rate recommended above. If a soil test calls for phosphorus and potassium, use a 10-10-10 but triple the rate.

On apple trees, last year's growth should be 8 to 10 inches, cherries should have 10 to 12 inches, and peaches should equal 12 to 15 inches of terminal growth. If less than this, apply the higher rate of fertilizer, and if more, apply the lesser amount.

Spread all fertilizer evenly on the ground away from the trunk of the tree and to the outer spread of the branches. Water in the fertilizer with at least 1/4 inch of water if rain does not do the job for you. (Ward Upham)

VEGETABLES

Blanching Cauliflower



Gardeners that haven't grown cauliflower before are often surprised that the heads of most varieties are a yellowish color and not the white they expect. The yellowish hue is a reaction to sunlight. In order to have the heads remain white, the developing heads must be covered to protect them from the sun. This is commonly done by pulling several of the outer leaves over the head when the head is the size of a silver dollar. Hold the leaves in place with a rubber band, tape or soft twine. Plants need to be checked every few days to make sure the curds of the expanding head don't begin to show. There are some varieties that

are self-blanching but watch them to make sure the leaves actually do cover the head. Self-blanching varieties are more likely to "work" in cool weather. (Ward Upham)

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ORNAMENTALS

There Never Used to be Fruit on Ornamental Pears



The fruit on ornamental pears is quite small; about the size of a marble. However, it can be very messy if it lands on sidewalks or driveways and people squish the fruit when walking or driving. You may have noticed that ornamental pears are producing fruit much more commonly than they have in the past. Why is this so? A little history is needed in order to understand what has happened.

Ornamental pears used to be called Bradford pears. This was a bit of a misnomer as 'Bradford' was a specific variety. Ornamental pears were called Bradfords because this was practically the only variety that people planted. Therefore, if you bought an ornamental pear a number of years ago, it was likely a Bradford. All was well and good until people noticed that Bradfords would fall apart after a number of years due to a weak branching structure. Therefore, nurseries started selling "improved" ornamental pears that were not Bradfords such as 'Aristocrat', 'Capital', 'Redspire', 'Chanticleer' and various other varieties. It was felt that all of these varieties had a stronger branching pattern than 'Bradford' but such may not be the case. Both 'Chanticleer' and 'Redspire' have shown branch breakage. 'Aristocrat' does appear to have better branch angles but more time is needed to make a firm recommendation.

Here is the key. Pears usually require cross-pollination in order to fruit. In other words, you must have two different varieties of pear before fruit forms. When all we had were Bradfords, we had no fruit due to a lack of cross-pollination. Now that we have such a mixture of varieties, we will get fruit as long as two different varieties of ornamental pears bloom at the same time and are close enough that bees can work between them.

This formation of fruit can also lead to a second problem. Volunteer trees can come up from the seed contained in the fruit. Therefore, you may see ornamental pears come up in areas where no one planted them. This has become enough of a problem that several states have added ornamental pears to their invasive plant list.

There are products that are sold as fruit preventers such as Florel but timing and air temperature are critical and our results have been mixed. (Ward Upham)

Controlling Grassy Weeds in Broadleaf Plants



Most gardeners are familiar with herbicides that can be used to eliminate broadleaves from grasses (i.e. dandelions from lawns). However, gardeners may not be as familiar with herbicides that can take grasses out of broadleaf plants like shrubs. There are two major weed killer types labeled for homeowners that are used to kill grassy weeds in broadleaf plants. On the commercial side, the trade names for these products are Fusilade and Poast. Homeowner labeling is more diverse. I have seen Fusilade

sold under the names of Ortho "Grass-B-Gon". Poast is sometimes sold to homeowners under the Poast label but I've seen it more commonly sold as "Bonide Grass Beater", "Fertilome Over the Top II Grass Killer", "Hi-Yield Grass Killer" and "Monterey Grass Getter." There may be other trade names, too. Fortunately, you can identify the product by the common chemical name listed on the label. Fusilade's common chemical name is fluazifop, and Poast's is sethoxydim.

If you decide to use one of these products, read the label carefully. Often, a crop oil must be added to the spray solution for the herbicide to work well. Some grassy weeds are not controlled such as bromegrass and sandbur. Mature tall fescue also is not controlled though seedling tall fescue is. Established bermudagrass is knocked back but rarely killed.

Though both these products can be used over the top of numerous broadleaf plants (including iris), there are some differences in labeling. For example, if you need to control grasses in vegetables, choose Poast as Fusilade is not labeled for vegetables. However, Poast products cannot be used on all vegetables and the waiting period between spraying and harvest may be so long as to make use impractical. To see a label for one of the products that contain sethoxydim, see [Hi-Yield Grass Killer](#). (Ward Upham)

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For questions or further information, contact: wupham@ksu.edu OR cdipman@ksu.edu

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<http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

The web version includes color images that illustrate subjects discussed. To subscribe to this newsletter electronically, send an e-mail message to cdipman@ksu.edu or wupham@ksu.edu listing your e-mail address in the message.

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