

Horticulture 2008 Newsletter No. 21 May 28, 2008

UPCOMING EVENTS

Post Harvest Handling Workshop

June 16, 2008

St. Clair Co. Library, Osceola, MO

Farm Tour: Bear Creek Farms

For more information, go to [Post Harvest Handling Workshop](#)

Kansas Arborists Summer Field Day

June 20, 2008

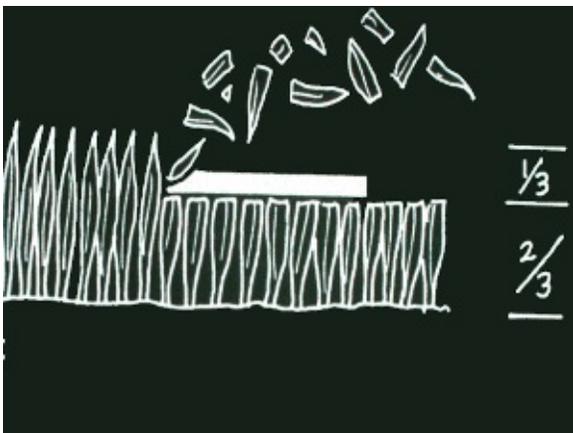
John C. Pair Hort Research Center (Haysville) & Bartlett Arboretum (Belle Plaine)

Fore more information, contact Tim McDonnell at (316) 788-0492 tmcdonne@ksu.edu

or go to

TURFGRASS

Too Wet to Mow the Lawn



What do you do when the lawn can't be cut due to constant rain? The best thing to do is to set your mower as high as possible and bring it down in steps. It is always best never to take more than one third of the grass blade off at one time. If more is taken, the plant reacts by using stored energy reserves to quickly send up new growth. This reduces the amount of energy available for the plant to deal with stress or damage done by insects or disease. However, sometimes it is just not possible to keep the "one-third rule." In such cases, cut as high as possible even though it may

mean you are cutting off more than one third of the blade. Bring the height down gradually by cutting more often and at progressively lower heights until you reach the target height. (WU)

Control of Prostrate Spurge



Prostrate spurge is one of the more difficult broadleaf weeds to control. It is a summer annual that must come up from seed every year. If caught when young, it is easier, though still difficult, to control. Correct herbicide selection is important. Mature plants are almost impossible to control, even with selected herbicides.

Several years ago K-State Research and Extension conducted a study on the phytotoxic effects of certain herbicides on buffalograss. During the application, we noted the presence of a large number of small prostrate spurge plants. As the study progressed, plots were rated for percent control of spurge. The results were interesting. We found that Drive (quinclorac) provided more than 90 percent control. Until recently, Drive was only available to commercial applicators. Now homeowners have two products that contain Drive. Those two products are Ortho Weed-B-Gon Max + Crabgrass Control and Bayer All-in-One Lawn Weed and Crabgrass Killer.

Dimension and Turflon Ester offered more than 80 percent control, and Trimec 78 percent. Dimension results were surprising because it is a preemergence herbicide with some postemergence activity that is commonly used for crabgrass control. (WU)

VEGETABLES

Cucumber Beetles and Bacterial Wilt



If you had cucumbers or muskmelons that suddenly turned brown and died last year, you may have had a disease known as bacterial wilt. The cucumber beetle carries this disease. Once a plant is infected, there is no cure, so prevention is the key. Because cucumber beetles overwinter as adults, early control measures are essential.

There are two types of cucumber beetles: striped and spotted. The striped cucumber beetle is the most common. The 1/4-inch-long beetles are conspicuously colored black head and antennae, straw-yellow thorax, and yellowish wing covers with three distinct parallel and longitudinal black stripes.

Beetles deposit their eggs in the soil around the bases of host plants. Protect young plants by using row covers, cones, or other types of mechanical barriers. Seal edges to ensure that the beetles do not find a place of entry. Plants will eventually outgrow these barriers or they will need to be removed to allow insect pollination of the flowers. From that point on, insecticides will need to be used.

Apply insecticides before you notice beetles in the planting. Continue to spray until the end of the season on weekly intervals. Homeowners can use rotenone, permethrin (numerous trade names), or methoxychlor. Check labels for waiting periods. Be careful to apply insecticides when bees are not active and the flowers are closed. This generally means early in the morning or late in the evening. Be especially cautious when night-time lows remain in the upper 60's and lower 70's, as bees will be active earlier in the morning and later in the evening than normal. (WU)

FRUIT

Borer Control in Peaches



Peach Tree Borer (Synanthrenus exitiosus) (Dahl)
Photo by Marianne Department of Agriculture WUSM InsectID 2018
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The first defense against borers is to maintain healthy, vigorous growth on our peaches. Do a good job of pruning, keep the trees watered as needed and control Peach Leaf Curl (see May 14 issue of this newsletter). Young trees are more likely to be attacked than older ones if the older trees are healthy.

Sprays should be applied the last week in June and again the last week in July for good control.

Thoroughly cover the bottom portion of the trunk to the point that some spray pools at the base of the tree. Peach tree borer lays eggs on the trunk of the

tree. When the larva hatches, it tunnels through the bark into the tree. If an insecticide is present on the trunk, the larva is killed when it tries to tunnel.

Most of the active ingredients that were labeled for peach tree borer and lesser peach tree borer in homeowner packaging are now gone. However, we still have permethrin which is found in numerous products. Those that have peach tree borer on the label include but are not limited to Hi-Yield Garden, Pet and Livestock Insect Control, Bonide Borer-Miner Killer and Gordon's Bug-No-More Yard & Garden Insect Spray. (WU)

MISCELLANEOUS

Rabbits in the Garden



Rabbits in gardens are a perennial problem because of the wide variety of plants they can feed on. At this time of year, they gravitate to young vegetables and flowers. However, there are some vegetables that are rarely bothered including potatoes, tomatoes, corn, squash, cucumbers and some peppers. The question is how do you protect other, more susceptible plants? Fencing provides a quick and effective control method. The fence does not need to be tall; 2 feet is sufficient. But the mesh must be sufficiently fine (1 inch or less) so young

rabbits will not be able to go through it. Support for the fence can be supplied by a number of products, but electric fence posts work well.

Often fencing is not an acceptable choice because it affects attractiveness of the garden. There are other ways to control rabbits including repellents, trapping and shooting. Repellents are often suggested for control but often do not last long and require frequent reapplication. Also, many are poisonous and cannot be used on plants or plant parts destined for human consumption. Live traps can be used to collect and then move to rabbits to a rural area several miles from where they were trapped. However, a number of baits that work well at other times of the year may not be as attractive now due to the smorgasbord of food available from the garden. Try a tightly rolled cabbage leaf held together with a toothpick. Shooting is another possibility when it is safe and legal to do so. (WU)

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To view Upcoming Events: <http://tinyurl.com/fswqe>

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