

# THE GRAPEVINE



**June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Larry Crouse

Extension Horticulture Agent

## ***Weekly Reminders:***

- \* Mulch vegetable garden.
- \* Pinch mums when they reach 6" tall to encourage bushier growth
- \* Make a vegetable garden "map" so that you remember what was planted in what spot.
- \* Scout for bagworms, we are a week away from the time to spray them

## **BROWN ROT OF PEACHES AND OTHER STONE FRUITS**

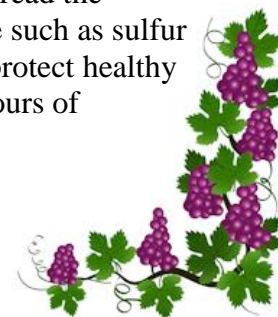
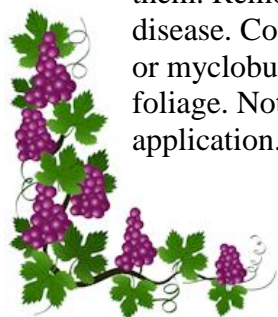
The wet weather we have seen in some areas has caused perfect conditions for the formation of brown rot on stone fruits such as peaches and plums. That is assuming you have any that escaped the spring frosts. Affected fruit develop a gray to brown, fuzzy growth on the fruit, itself, which may rot in as little as a day or two. It is best to start treating fruit about a month before harvest. My peach varieties often ripen in early August but other varieties may be ready for harvest earlier. Fruit that shows symptoms cannot be saved but should be destroyed to prevent further spread. Use Captan or myclobutanil (Immunox or F-Stop Lawn & Garden Fungicide) for control. Many fruit tree sprays contain Captan but check the label to be certain. Apply Captan or myclobutanil every 7 to 14 days. Both products can be applied up to the day of harvest. Do not store left-over spray, as Captan breaks down and loses effectiveness after just one hour.

## ***Deadheading Flowers***

Some plants will bloom more profusely if the old, spent flowers are removed, a process called deadheading. Annuals especially, focus their energy on seed production to insure that the species survives. If you remove old flowers, the energy normally used to produce seed is now available to produce more flowers. Perennials can also benefit by lengthening the blooming season. However, some gardeners enjoy the look of spent flowers of perennials such as sedum or purple coneflower. Also, the seed produced can be a good food source for birds. Not all plants need to be deadheaded, including sedum 'Autumn Joy', melampodium, impatiens, most flowering vines, Lythrum, periwinkle (Catharanthus), and wishbone flower (Torenia). Those that do increase bloom in response to deadheading include hardy geraniums, coreopsis, petunias, marigolds, snapdragons, begonias, roses, campanulas, blanket flowers, delphiniums, zinnias, sweet peas, salvia, scabiosa, annual heliotrope, geraniums (Pelargonium), and yarrow. Deadheading is easily accomplished by removing spent flowers. With some plants, pinching between a thumb and finger can do this, but tough, wiry stems will require a scissors or pruning shears.

## ***Rust on Hollyhock***

Watch for rust on hollyhock. This is the most common disease on hollyhock and can cause serious injury as leaves are progressively killed through the summer. Look for yellow spots on the surface of the leaves and orangish to brown pustules on the underside. Infections can also take place on stems and green flower parts. The first line of defense is to remove all hollyhock stalks, leaves and other debris in the fall and destroy them. Remove any infected foliage you see now. Just be sure the foliage is dry so you don't spread the disease. Continue to remove diseased leaves as soon as they show spots. Try using a fungicide such as sulfur or myclobutanil (Spectracide Immunox or Fertilome F-Stop Lawn and Garden Fungicide) to protect healthy foliage. Note that sulfur may burn leaves if the air temperature is over 85 degrees within 24 hours of application. Follow label directions for timing and rate.







## ***Pinching Mums***

Though some garden mums do not require pinching back, most varieties will benefit. Pinching is done by removing the top inch of growth by pinching it between your thumbnail and forefinger. You can also use a scissors or even a pair of hedge shears. Pinching encourages lateral buds to break and grow resulting in a shorter, sturdier and fuller plant. The first pinching is usually done when the mums reach six inches in height. Remove about the top inch of growth. A second pinching should be done when the new growth from the previous pinch reaches about 4 inches. Cut the new growth down by about half. We may have time for one more pinch but maybe not as the last pinch should take place around July 4. Pinching later than July 4 can delay flowering resulting in a shorter time of flowering before frost kills the blooms. You may find a video on pinching mums helpful. It is found on our Kansas Healthy Yards website.

## ***Rains Trigger Mushroom Development***

Recent rains in certain areas of Kansas have resulted in the appearance of mushrooms in home lawns and landscape beds. Although mushrooms are often spectacular in size and color, most are relatively harmless to plant life. Some of these mushrooms are associated with arc-like or circular patterns in turfgrass called fairy rings. The ring pattern is caused by the outward growth of fungal mycelium. The mycelium forms a dense, mat-like structure in the soil that decomposes organic matter. This decomposition releases nitrate into the soil, which in turn stimulates the growth of the grass at the outer portion of the ring. This results in a dark green appearance of the grass at the margin of the ring. Unfortunately, the thick fungal mat formed by the fungus interferes with water infiltration. The fungus also may release certain byproducts that are toxic to the turf. This may lead to dieback of the turf close to the ring. Therefore, in some cases the ring is evidenced by a darker green color and in others, by a brown ring with the outside edge being darker green than the rest of the turf. Fairy rings are difficult to control. You can sometimes eliminate the ring by digging to a depth of 18 inches and 18 inches wide on both sides of the ring, refilling the hole with non-infested soil. Or you can try to mask the symptoms by fertilizing the rest of the lawn so that it is as dark green as the ring. This often isn't a good idea because it tends to promote other turf problems. Some mushrooms in lawns are not associated with fairy rings. These may be mycorrhizal (symbiotic association with tree roots) or saprophytic (live on dead organic matter such as wood, etc.) in the soil. Because some of these mushrooms are beneficial, you don't really want to kill them. Besides, a fungicide spray to the mushroom itself does little good. Remember the mushroom is simply the fruiting structure of the organism. Most of the fungus is below ground and inaccessible to the chemical. If mushrooms are a nuisance, pick them and dispose of them as soon as they appear. If there are too many for that to be practical, mow them off. Also, mushrooms tend to go away as soil dries. Patience may be the best control. Some of the mushrooms in the lawn are edible, but others are poisonous. Never eat mushrooms unless you are sure of their identity.

Larry E. Crouse  
Butler County Horticulture Agent  
K-State Research & Extension  
206 N Griffith, Suite A  
El Dorado, KS 67042  
(316)321-9660  
[lcrouse@ksu.edu](mailto:lcrouse@ksu.edu)



***Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Charlene Miller, KSRE - Butler Co. Director, 316-321-9660***