

Southwind District



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In This Issue

[Leaf Spot on Oak](#)

[Twig Die Back](#)

[Lawn Fertilization](#)

[Ornamental grasses](#)

[Planting Trees in the Fall](#)

[Retirement Programs](#)

Quick Links

[Prairie Star Flower Listing](#)

[Kansas Prairie Bloom Listing](#)

[Kansas Weather Data Library](#)

[Southwind Extension District](#)

Up-Coming Events

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Dear Gardener,

I think we can all agree that this summer has certainly been different. I cannot recall a time that August has ever been so GREEN! The lawnmowers have definitely not stopped this summer.

I heard a new phrase recently that has me a bit concerned about how this winter is going to play out. "Polar Coaster." Apparently the Farmers Almanac is predicting a bitterly cold winter with periods of extremely warm temperatures - hence the word coaster. I don't know about you, but I'm thinking we could just skip the "coaster" and head right into next spring!

Sincerely,

Krista Harding
District Extension Agent

Tubakia Leaf Spot of Oak



This leaf spot disease of oak is showing up in the Southwind District. I have made house calls to look at this condition in both lola and Fort Scott. Red oaks are more likely to be affected than white oaks. Distinct round spots, dead areas that follow the veins, and blotches of dead tissue are all signs of this disease. Leaves that are severely infected may drop and that has been happening this year. However, trees rarely lose enough leaves to harm the health of the tree. No fungicide treatments are recommended.

Twig Dieback on Oak



I have been seeing a lot of leaf flagging on oak trees in our immediate area. I think it has been worse this year due to the amount of rainfall we received this summer. This is caused by a fungal disease called Botryosphaeria canker. Affected trees show wilting or "flagging" of terminal growth on the ends of branches. Dieback usually extends 4 to 6 inches down the twig with leaves bending back toward the twig before turning brown. Dead leaves remain attached to the tree. If you look closely at the twig, you should see a rather marked transition from healthy to diseased tissue. Take a knife and scrape away some of the outer bark tissue. Healthy tissue is light green. Diseased tissue tends to be brown to black. Botryosphaeria canker differs from oak wilt in that only the tips of branches are affected. Oak wilt affects whole branches. This disease causes such minor damage that chemical control measures are unwarranted. Dead twigs on small trees may be pruned off if desired.

Give Cool-Season Grasses a Boost

September is here and that means it is the ideal time to give your fescue lawn a little boost. If you only fertilize your cool-season grass once per



year, this is the time of year to do it! Fall is the time of year that cool-season grasses naturally thicken up by forming new shoots at the base of the existing plants.

Apply 1 to 1.5 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. The rates recommended on a lawn fertilizer bag usually results in this amount. A quick-release fertilizer should be used this time of year. The second most important time to fertilize fescue lawns is in November. Same type of fertilizer and rates apply.

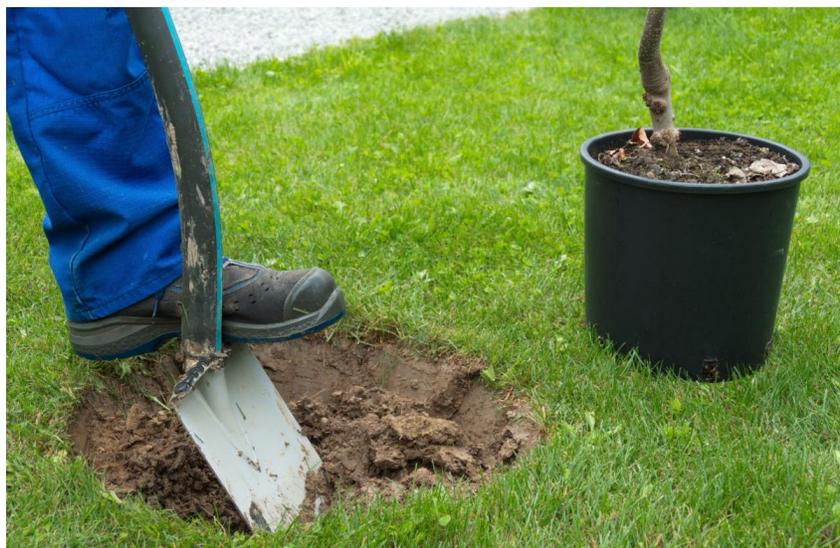
To Cut or Not to Cut



Is it best to cut back ornamental grass in the fall or the spring? As a general rule, ornamental grasses should not be cut back while green. This is because they need time to move energy found in the foliage, down into the roots. Even when browned by cold weather, most gardeners tend to leave the foliage until spring because it adds interest to the winter landscape. I personally like seeing snow and ice captured by my ornamental grasses (can make for a cool picture too!). Early March is the preferred time to cut back these grasses.

Another question - can you divide ornamental grasses in the fall? Spring is the best time because divisions done in the fall may not root well enough to survive the winter.

Planting Trees in the Fall



The fall can be an excellent time to plant trees. During the spring, soils are typically cold and may be so wet that low oxygen levels inhibit root growth. Take this spring for example. There was hardly ever a window of time that a tree could have been

successfully planted.

Planting during the fall will encourage good root growth because the soils are warm and have plenty of moisture. Fall root growth means the tree becomes established quicker and will be able to better withstand summer stresses.

The best time to plant in the fall is early September to late October. However, some trees do not produce enough root growth during the fall to survive the winter, and are best planted in the spring. These include birch, redbud, magnolia, willows and dogwood.

Up-Coming Extension Program

Planning for Retirement

Make the rest of your life the best of your life!

Join our Retirement Planning Panel to learn about

Kansas Advance Healthcare Directives

Health Insurance Options

Financial Planning

Funeral Pre-planning

Fort Scott - September 5

Chanute - September 10

Iola - September 19

Yates Center - October 3

RSVPs for all sessions should be made to the Fort Scott office:
620-223-3720 or email joymiller@ksu.edu

Visit the Southwind website for presenters and details:
www.southwind.k-state.edu

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