

Horticulture Tips

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Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Oklahoma State University

GARDEN TIPS FOR JULY!

David Hillock

Vegetable Garden

- Make fall vegetable garden plantings in late July. Fact Sheet [HLA-6009](#) gives planting recommendations.

Lawn

- Brown patch disease of cool-season grasses can be a problem. ([HLA-6420](#))
- Meet water requirements of turfgrasses. ([HLA-6420](#))
- Fertilization of warm-season grasses can continue if water is present for growth. ([HLA-6420](#))
- Vegetative establishment of warm-season grasses should be completed by the end of July to ensure the least risk of winter kill. ([HLA-6419](#))
- Mowing heights for cool-season turfgrasses should be at 3 inches during hot, dry summer months. Gradually raise mowing height of bermudagrass lawns from 1½ to 2 inches.
- Sharpen or replace mower blades as needed. Shredded leaf blades are an invitation to disease and allow more stress on the grass.

Tree and Shrub

- Control bermudagrass around trees and shrubs with Poast, Fusilade, or Glyphosate herbicides. Follow directions closely to avoid harming desirable plants.

Fruits

- Continue insect combat and control in the orchard, garden and landscape. ([EPP-7306](#), [EPP-7313](#), [EPP-7319](#))
- Check pesticide labels for “stop” spraying recommendations prior to harvest.
- Harvest fruit from the orchard early in the morning and refrigerate as soon as possible.

Flowers

- Divide and replant crowded Hybrid Iris (Bearded Iris) after flowering until August.

General Landscape

- Water plants deeply and early in the morning. Most plants need approximately 1 to 2½ inches of water per week.
- Providing birdbaths shelter and food will help turn your landscape into a backyard wildlife habitat.
- Insect identification is important so you don’t get rid of the “Good Guys.” ([EPP-7307](#))
- The hotter and drier it gets, the larger the spider mite populations!
- Expect some leaf fall, a normal reaction to drought. Water young plantings well.

Turfgrass Management Tips for Summer Drought Stress Conditions

Justin Quetone Moss

With temperatures already breaking the 100°F mark in Oklahoma this year, lawns may be experiencing stress due to the extreme heat and dry conditions. The following are tips for summer stressed lawns:

- Raise the mowing height to 1-2 inches for bermudagrass lawns and 3 inches for cool-season lawns such as tall fescue.
- Avoid heavy fertilization during summer stress, instead apply light and frequent applications of fertilizers according to soil test results and plant need.
- Avoid fertilizing non-irrigated areas during summer stress.
- Water the lawn only as needed to prevent summer stress or dormancy, don't keep the lawn wet all the time, but allow the soil to dry between watering cycles.
- Do not water to cause runoff and do not water impervious surfaces such as sidewalks and driveways.
- Apply pesticides only when warranted and according to labeled directions. Many herbicides should not be applied when air temperatures exceed 85°F.
- Check the turf thatch layer. Thatch layers thicker than 0.5 inch can cause water infiltration problems that often go unnoticed until summer stress.

Post-Harvest Irrigation of Small Fruit Crops

Eric T. Stafne

Some small fruit crops such as strawberries, blackberries and blueberries fruit in the spring to early summer. By the time the really hot weather of July and August sets in, these fruit crops have finished bearing and await next year. It may be tempting to relax management of these plants, but that would be a grievous error. Even though the plants are not fruiting, that does not mean that they are not still growing. In fact, it is during this critical time period that several functions are occurring, including fruit bud set for next year, production of new canes, and continuing root growth. Therefore, it is imperative to irrigate the plants during hot, dry weather.

Leaves can be shed when plants are stressed, yet leaves provide the driving force to ensure plant health and productivity – photosynthesis. A reduction in photosynthetic activity can impact next year's crop through a reduction in fruitful buds, weaken the plant leading to possible infestation of insect or disease pests, and also a reduction in cold hardiness. Any reduction in cold hardiness could predispose plants to damage by temperatures in which they may not normally be damaged. This type of injury can occur in fall, winter or spring.

So, before shutting off the water and letting the small fruit plants fend for themselves, remember that a little irrigation during stressful hot and dry conditions can go a long way to ensure healthy, fruitful plants.

Heat Disorder Symptoms First Aid

David Hillock

The heat of summer is here and extreme temperatures can lead to heat related emergencies, which are common, but can be avoided. Gardeners should be cautious and work in the garden during the early morning hours or late in the evening. During the hottest part of the day find a good garden magazine or book to read and enjoy it in the comfort of an air conditioned room. If it is necessary to work outdoors or in an area without air conditioning, be sure to drink plenty of water, limit exposure to sun, dress in light-colored clothing, take frequent breaks and apply sunscreen.

Below are some heat disorder symptoms and how to deal with them.

Sunburn – Redness and pain. In severe cases swelling of skin, blisters, fever, headaches. Ointments for mild cases if blisters appear and do not break. If breaking occurs, apply dry sterile dressing. Serious, extensive cases should be seen by physician.

Heat Cramps – Painful spasms usually in muscles of legs and abdomen possible. Heavy sweating. Firm pressure on cramping muscles or gentle massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue use.

Heat Exhaustion – Heavy sweating, weakness, skin cold, pale and clammy. Pulse thready. Normal temperature possible. Fainting and vomiting. Get victim out of sun. Lay down and loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths. Fan or move victim to air conditioned room. Sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue use. If vomiting continues, seek immediate medical attention.

Heat Stroke (or sunstroke) – High body temperature (106°F or higher). Hot dry skin. Rapid and strong pulse. Possible unconsciousness. **HEAT STROKE IS A SEVERE MEDICAL EMERGENCY. SUMMON EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE OR GET THE VICTIM TO A HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY. DELAY CAN BE FATAL.** Move the victim to a cooler environment Reduce body temperature with cold bath or sponging. Use extreme caution. Remove clothing, use fans and air conditioners. If temperature rises again, repeat process. Do not give fluids.

Ginkgo or Maidenhair Tree

David Hillock

Ginkgo or Maidenhair Tree is a unique species. Unlike many other genera which have several known species within a genus, Ginkgo only has one species – *Ginkgo biloba*. It also dates back to the fossil ages and is considered to be one of the oldest trees, having been around for 150 million years. Ginkgo was also probably native to North American at one time, but its native habitat now is in Eastern China.

Ginkgo is a dioecious, deciduous gymnosperm, meaning it produces male and female flowers on separate plants, loses its leaves in winter and produces a naked seed on female trees. Many named cultivars exist, most of which are male clones. Buying unnamed clones can be risky

because you will not know if the tree is female or male until the tree matures when it is about 20 to 25 years old and starts producing fruit.

The fruit, which is not actually a true fruit, but a seed surrounded by a fleshy covering is quite messy and stinks. However, the Asian people find the seed to be quite tasty and use it in dishes. If you don't want to mess with the fruit it is important to plant male trees.

Ginkgo is also known for its medicinal properties. The extracts are used as supplements to improve brain functioning by increasing blood flow, circulation and oxygenation. It is also known to be good for headaches, memory loss, tinnitus and depression.

In the landscape ginkgo is quite a spectacular, pest free tree. The leaves are quite unique being fan shaped, dichotomously veined, and bright green in summer with excellent yellow fall color. The tree is slow to medium in growth, growing 10 to 15 feet in a 10 to 12 year period. Obviously it does not provide the "instant" shade that many are seeking, but over time becomes a beautiful, picturesque tree well suited for many landscapes. Ginkgo can get quite large over time, reaching 50 to 80 feet high and 30 to 40 feet wide. The biggest one I have seen in Oklahoma, one of our champion trees, measured in 1999 in Ponca City, at 58 feet tall and 50 feet wide.

Ginkgos prefer sandy, deep, moderately moist soil; but have proven to be quite adaptable and tolerate a wide range of growing conditions. It is also known to be quite drought and pollution tolerant making it an excellent urban tree choice.

How Much Do You Know About Agriculture?

Shelley Mitchell

Agriculture is a major industry in the United States, yet many consumers have little knowledge of the subject. This is because most Americans are two or three generations removed from the farm. Fewer than two percent of Americans now farm for a living. As a result, recent generations are growing up largely ignorant of the sources of their food, clothes and other items. I taught nine years of high school science in Oklahoma, and many of my students had no idea which plants provide us with flour to make breads and pastries. Many thought there were only two kinds of cattle – the "black and white" cattle that give us milk, and the "black" cattle that give us meat. One student, as a tenth grader, finally realized that plants are living organisms. Many of my students had sprouted lima beans in first grade, but most of them did not recall that beans are seeds. When people don't realize the origins of their food and fiber, how can they make good decisions about the future of agriculture? How can they vote knowledgeably about any issues that affect agriculture? How can they be informed consumers?

One way to increase agriculture literacy is to incorporate agriculture into school curricula. Students love 'real world' examples and agriculture can be tied into every subject in school. Most states have an Ag in the Classroom program, with lessons prepared in every subject area for elementary grades (and up to high school in some states), to help increase agriculture literacy. Parents can also help by tearing kids away from their electronic gadgets and helping them start a garden or raise an animal. Even something as simple as planting a peanut and

watching it grow can help kids understand where their food comes from. Visit a farmer's market, watch a cow being milked, attend a county fair – there are plenty of opportunities to learn about agriculture. Agritourism is a growing industry in many states, with opportunities to pick fruit, tour wineries, help with planting or harvesting, ride a horse, or even round up cattle. However you do it, get the younger generation interested in learning about the sources of the products they use every day. The more they know, the more they will respect and protect their resources.

Peach Production Workshop – University of Arkansas – July 9, 2009

Eric Stafne

The University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture will host a peach production workshop for experienced as well as beginner growers at the Fruit Research Station at Clarksville during the afternoon of Thursday, July 9. This event will provide information for anyone thinking about expanding their existing orchards, changing to newer cultivars, planting a new orchard or looking for marketing opportunities. A large number of peach cultivars and selections will be displayed, as well, emphasizing the university's peach breeding program.

Two prominent speakers — Nathan Milburn of Milburn Orchards in Elkton, MD, and Jerry Frecon, Professor and Agricultural Agent in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Management Agents, Rutgers University — will provide updates on peach production and marketing.

The cost of the workshop is \$20 per person and includes dinner. Registration deadline is Tuesday, July 3, 2009. Because of dinner arrangements, no walk-in registration will be available at this workshop.

To register, contact:
Katie Hanshaw
Administrative Assistant
University of Arkansas - Division of Agriculture
Fruit Research Station
479-754-2406
e-mail: khanshaw@uark.edu

Upcoming Horticulture Events

Lane Ag Center Organic Workshop and Field Day

An educational workshop and field tour on Organic Farming will be held Tuesday, July 14 in the afternoon and evening. The event is open to anyone interested in learning about sustainable and organic gardening and farming practices. The event will provide an opportunity to learn about experience gained in southeast Oklahoma with certified organic vegetable production. Activities will begin with an afternoon workshop on the use of manures use for soil fertility and food safety concerns of organic farming. The field tour will address a variety of organic vegetable research

and demonstration projects. An evening dinner will be provided (donations gladly accepted to help defray meal costs). For further details, call 580-889-7343 or email jim.shrefler@okstate.edu. The Lane Agriculture Center is located on State Highway 3, 10 miles east of Atoka, Oklahoma.

Tree Care Conference

October 28, 2009, OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater

Global Horticulture

December 2, 2009, Stillwater

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or stephanie.larimer@okstate.edu.