



The Hoe Truth Newsletter

Helping You Grow!

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How To Help A Drought Stressed Lawn

Kentucky has been pretty dry the past few weeks. September and October are usually our driest months. Even if we get a heavy rainfall in the near future, it won't completely alleviate drought symptoms. When a lawn becomes excessively dry, the soil surface develops some water repellency that prevents water from soaking in during a quick, hard rain event. Here are some things you can do to help your thirsty grass and hopefully avoid having to completely reseed your lawn.

- Water every other day or every third day until good, soaking rains begin.
- Apply about two-thirds of an inch of water each time. You can check this by probing the soil with a knife or screwdriver to determine if the soil is wet 2 to 3 inches deep.
- Water in the early morning to help reduce diseases, remove dew and reduce evaporative water loss.
- Water areas that have the earliest browning first. These are often on southern or western facing slopes or areas with heavy clay soils, very compacted soil or rocks near the surface.
- If possible, don't mow a drought-stricken yard until you can water it or you know a soaking rain is on the way. Weeds are still growing and flowering during summer droughts. Wait for the rain, then mow off the weeds.
- Don't apply herbicides during a summer drought. They won't work when weeds are suffering and can damage drought-stressed grass more than weeds.
- Wait for a soaking rain before applying nitrogen to the lawn in the fall. Nitrogen can greatly improve a lawn's drought recovery.





Black Knot of Stone Fruit

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IMPORTANCE

Black knot is a common, often serious, disease of stone fruit, primarily affecting plums and cherries in Kentucky. Ornamental *Prunus* species, as well as wild plums and cherries, may also be affected. Trees in both commercial and residential plantings are susceptible.

SYMPTOMS

Black knot is aptly named for the conspicuous black knotty growths that form on infected branches (FIGURE 1). Initially, however, these irregular swellings or knots are small and light brown (FIGURE 2). One year after infection, the enlarging knots become olive-green with a velvety surface. As the season progresses, swellings harden, become brittle, and turn black (FIGURE 3), reaching lengths of 6 inches by the end of the growing season. Often only one side of a limb is affected (FIGURE 4); but, in some cases, limbs may become completely encircled. Knots continue to expand each year until girdled branches eventually die.



CAUSE & DISEASE DEVELOPMENT

Black knot is caused by the fungus *Apiosporina morbosa* (syn. *Dibotryon morbosum*), which overwinters in knots on previously infected twigs and branches. Spores develop within knots in spring between bud break to shuck split and are spread by wind and rain. Only elongating (actively growing) twigs of the current season's growth are susceptible. While infection takes place in spring, knot development is not evident until autumn.



FIGURE 1. BLACK KNOT DISEASE IS EASILY RECOGNIZED, EVEN FROM A DISTANCE, BY THE BLACK KNOTTY GROWTHS APPEARING ON INFECTED BRANCHES.

FIGURE 2. EARLY INFECTIONS APPEAR AS LIGHT BROWN SWELLINGS (A), LATER TURNING BLACK (B).

Plant of The Month



Perennial

Hardy in USDA Zones 4A - 8B

↑ Height: 24-48 in

↔ Space: 18-24 in

☀ More than 6 Hours of Daily Sun

💧 Light to Medium Moisture

🕒 Blooms Early Summer to Mid Fall

- Soft pink flowers with raspberry purple markings
- Strong, upright stems
- Tough, long blooming perennial
- Prefers full sun and well-drained soil
- Likes average moisture
- Insect control may be necessary
- Pair with Daylily, Shasta Daisy, Yarrow

Horticulture Webinars, FREE!

Webinar
Wednesdays

12:30pm EST/11:30am CST

Registration link:

<https://tinyurl.com/UKYHortWebWed21>

September To-Do's

Keep watering and fertilizing annuals, they can give you terrific color until frost.

Don't trim trees and shrubs now, wait until the plants go completely dormant. You can trim evergreens in December if you want greenery for the holidays. It is best to trim trees and shrubs in February. Unless they bloom in the spring and then you wait and prune just after they finish blooming.

Remove and destroy all old vegetable plants. These plants harbor insect and disease that will be ready to infest your garden next year. If you compost this material make sure that your pile gets hot enough to destroy these organisms.

If you aren't sure your pile is hot enough make a separate pile for vegetable plants and don't put this compost back in the vegetable garden.

Plant newly purchased trees now but keep them well watered. September planted trees have a chance to root in well before cold temperatures.

Don't prune trees and shrubs now.

Check spruce and arborvitae for spider mites. Place a white sheet of paper under some of the branches and tap it. If you have an infestation, you will be able to see the little creatures on the paper.

Spray spider mites with Avid, insecticidal soap, or horticultural oil. Don't apply the soaps or oils to blue spruce etc., it will take the blue off.

Remove and destroy all "mummies" from fruit crops. Mummies are dead dried fruit that doesn't fall from the tree. This material acts as a reservoir for next year's pests.

Do soil tests on areas you plan to plant fruit crops such as blueberries and strawberries next year. It takes 3 to 6 months for lime or Sulphur to activate.



September To-Do's



Control fruit flies that have been entering your house on the increased fruits and vegetable you have been bringing in lately by simply sucking them up with the vacuum.

Make a fruit fly trap by mixing a quarter cup of apple cider vinegar with a quarter cup water and one drop of dish liquid. The flies are drawn to the vinegar and will land on the surface of the water, without the soap they can stand on water but the soap breaks the tension and they drown! You can also cut and invert an old plastic bottle so even if they get in and don't land on the water they are trapped.

Take a soil test of your lawn before you spot seed or renovate.



Don't fertilize existing lawns now, wait until late October, November, or December.

Keep newly seeded lawns or areas well watered until it is well established and has had a couple mowings.

Don't apply weed killers to newly seeded or sodded areas.

September is a good time to divide and plant perennials. It's still warm enough for growth to occur without too much stress and it gives them time to root in before winter.



Go ahead and soil test your flower beds. Most flowers prefer a pH between 5.5 and 6.5. Now is a good time to correct any pH problems where the plants will be ready to grow come spring.

Don't apply nitrogen to perennials in the fall this includes September.

Plant garlic bulbs now for harvest next July. Be sure to plant the root or fat end down.

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Extension Tips Daily After Farm Report



Scalloped Okra and Corn

4 cups sliced fresh or frozen okra

4 tablespoons olive oil

1½ cups cooked corn kernels,
drained

2 tablespoons whole wheat flour

1 cup skim milk

8 ounces shredded 2% cheddar
cheese

1 cup Italian style dry bread
crumbs

1. Stir-fry okra in 2 tablespoons olive
oil for 10 minutes. **Place** in baking dish
alternating layers with drained corn.

2. Prepare white sauce by heating
remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in
saucepan over low heat and blending
in whole wheat flour. **Cook** oil and flour
mixture 1 to 2 minutes.

3. Add skim milk all at once, cooking
quickly and stirring constantly until
mixture thickens.

4. Stir in cheese until blended.

5. Pour mixture over vegetables.

Sprinkle bread crumbs over casserole.
Bake at 350° F for approximately 45
minutes, until casserole is heated
through and the crumbs have browned.

Yield: 8, 1 cup servings

Nutrition Analysis: 220 calories; 9 g total
fat; 2 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 5 mg cholesterol;
340 mg sodium; 24 g total carbohydrate; 4 g dietary
fiber; 7 g sugars; 9 g protein; 20% recommended
allowance for vitamin C; 20% recommended
allowance for calcium; 8% recommended allowance
for iron.

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your
grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

