

JULY GARDEN CHECKLIST

In this weeks article I want to mention things gardeners need to be considering for July. The following is a garden checklist:

- Water trees before drought stress begins because you can never play catch up on watering trees. Begin watering one week after a substantial rain (an inch or more). For well established trees, water deep once a week. Deep means a good soaking. Newly planted trees require watering no more than twice a week during a heat stress period.
- Are your tomatoes leaves turning yellow with spots on them from the bottom up and defoliating? This is early blight which is a disease that needs to be prevented before it starts. This fungus can survive in the soil for several years, so once you've had the problem in your garden you have to spray with chlorothalonil or maneb every 7 days with the first application when plants are 8-10 inches high. If disease is present, spray every 4-5 days. Be sure to read and follow label directions.
- Tomato blossom drop is a problem as daytime temperature hits the upper 90s and night temperature does not fall below 75. After the summer heat is gone and as cooler temps come, your tomato plants will set again. If blossom end rot is a problem, remember it is a calcium deficiency and can be minimized by keeping the moisture level constant and spraying with a soluble calcium called Stop Rot. If you don't have a current soil test, take a soil sample to see if your pH is alright.
- Corn earworms are a real disappointment to find when shucking your first corn of the season and they are so easy to prevent. Use Sevin (liquid, dust or wettable powder) applied directly to the silk when it first appears and every other day until silks turn brown.
- Early July is the time to plant pumpkins if you are wanting them for fall decorating. To ensure a crop you must provide water and spray to control squash bugs and cucumber beetles. Use Thiodan 50% WP or Sevin (liquid or wettable powder). Spray every 7 to 14 days for best results.
- Start planning for a fall garden. Make plantings of squash, tomato, beans, cucumbers, peas, and any other vegetable which mature before late October.
- If you haven't already done so, put your leftover garden seeds in a ziplock bag and drop them in the freezer. You can keep many garden seeds this way for several years including seeds you collect from the garden, flowers or vegetables.
- Keep pinching back your flowering herbs like basil, oregano and mint to prevent them from flowering and going to seed. You can use or store your trimmings.
- Avoid heavy summer pruning. Light pruning is fine. Even small limbs in the way of the lawn mower are fine to remove during a hot summer.

- Dead head your summer annuals and fertilize lightly with ammonium nitrate (1/2 lb. [1 cup] per 100 sq. ft.) If your petunias get too leggy cut them back for more color this summer.
- Increase your intervals between spraying your roses for black spot. But do not totally quit spraying for the summer because heavy dews can create a favorable environment for this dreaded disease to show up again.
- Check your trees and shrubs for bagworms. Bagworms can be found on any plant but they prefer cedars, junipers and arborvitaes. Several insecticides will do a good job of controlling this hungry caterpillar. This includes: Bt, Sevin, malathion, Orthene or permethrin.
- Check azaleas for lacebugs. This insect can be found on many different ornamentals even on some trees causing mottled discoloration and general decline of the plant. Control by using Cygon, malathion, or Orthene. Two to three applications at 10-day intervals may be needed for complete control. During hot weather it is always suggested to spray in the morning or evening to avoid leaf burns.
- Seeing crape myrtles in bloom is a sure sign that summer is here. For a slightly longer blooming period, prune off individual flower heads as soon as the head is finished blooming. The plant will produce additional flowers into the fall months. Crape myrtles may not bloom if they are nutritionally deficient, over fertilized with nitrogen or growing in excessive shade.

For more information on any of the above points, contact the Baxter County Cooperative Extension office at 425-2335.

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