



Ag & Hort Update

June 2009

The weather is really warming up, crops are getting in the field, and gardens are well underway- it's almost summer in Iowa! As your thoughts turn to new growth and more time outdoors, I hope the information in this month's newsletter is helpful. And remember, I'm always at the extension office to help as questions pop up this season! Enjoy the beautiful weather and the excitement of summer!

-Kate Olson

Upcoming Dates:

June 12th - Clothing entries due

June 15th - Fair entries due

June 16th - WIN Field Day

June 20th - Pullorum Testing

July 1st - State Fair Livestock Entries Due

July 3rd - Extension office closed

July 8th - Fair Cleanup day

July 12th-20th - Fair

Ask the ISU Garden Expert

What are some good drought tolerant annuals?

Many annual flowers perform best when they have a consistent supply of moisture throughout the growing season. However, some annuals tolerate dry conditions quite well. After they've been planted, drought tolerant annuals often need to be watered a few times until they're established. Once established, drought tolerant annuals require little watering. Drought tolerant annuals include periwinkle (*Catharanthus roseus*), cockscomb (*Celosia* spp.), spider flower (*Cleome hassleriana*), cosmos (*Cosmos* spp.), globe amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa*), medallion flower (*Melampodium paludosum*), rose moss (*Portulaca grandiflora*), dusty miller (*Senecio cineraria*), dahlberg daisy (*Thymophylla tenuiloba*) and zinnia (*Zinnia* spp.).

Why is my hackberry tree losing some of its new leaves?

The loss of leaves on hackberries in spring is an occasional phenomenon in Iowa and surrounding states. The exact cause has never been determined. In past years, no association was found between the leaf drop and insects or diseases. The most popular theory is that cold spring temperatures may have damaged the leaf buds or newly developing leaves, causing the leaf drop. It's likely the loss of leaves in spring is temporary. In past years, affected hackberries quickly developed new leaves and recovered completely.

There are light green growths on the upper leaf surface of my silver maple. What are they and what effect will they have on the tree?

The light green growths are probably a type of gall. Galls are abnormal plant growths caused by insects, mites or other organisms.

Heavy infestations of galls may disfigure a tree's foliage and cause premature leaf drop. However, leaf galls normally do not cause serious harm to healthy, well established trees. Nothing can be done once the galls have formed. Preventative applications of insecticides or miticides (in future years) usually are neither practical nor necessary.

How can I control squash bugs?

Squash bugs can be serious pests of summer and winter squash. Squash bugs have piercing-sucking mouthparts. Heavy feeding causes entire leaves to wilt, turn brown and die. Several methods can be used to control squash bugs in the garden. Brick red egg masses on the undersides of leaves and squash bug adults can be removed by hand. Adults also can be trapped under boards or shingles placed under the plants. Turn the objects over daily and collect and destroy the hiding squash bugs. Small, immature squash bugs (nymphs) can be controlled with insecticides, such as Sevin, permethrin or insecticidal soap. Sprays are generally more effective than dusts. If the squash plants are blooming, spray in the evening after the honey bees have quit foraging for the day. In fall, remove and destroy garden plant debris to deprive squash bugs of overwintering sites.

When can I plant peppers in my garden?

Peppers are a warm-season crop. Plant peppers in the garden after the danger of frost is past. In central Iowa, peppers can be planted in mid-May. Gardeners in southern Iowa can plant one week earlier, while those in northern counties should wait an extra week. The last practical date for planting peppers is approximately June 20.

Get answers to all your yard and garden questions at www.yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu. For specific questions, call the hotline at (515) 294-3108, Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30

Western Iowa No-Tillers to Hold Field Day on June 16th

The second Western Iowa No-tillers (WIN) Demonstration Field Day is planned for Tuesday, June 16 near Shelby, Iowa. More than 200 producers and agriculture professionals attended the daylong event in 2008 to learn more about implementing no-till practices. No-till farming practices provide a positive option for southwest Iowa producers who have highly erodible soils in their fields and are dealing with increasing input costs. To accommodate an anticipated larger audience, more equipment displays and increased parking, the 2009 event will be held at the Carstens 1880 Farmstead just south of Shelby, Iowa.

Field day speakers will include Iowa's Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey, DTN ag meteorologist Bryce Anderson and ISU Extension ag economist Chad Hart. A panel of area farmers with years of no-till practices experience will be on hand to answer questions. Prominent no-till farmer Randy Rink of Pender, Nebraska will also be in attendance to discuss cover crop usage.

Topics at this year's field day will also include corn on corn, fertilizer placement and cover crops. Field trials will feature planting in corn stubble and the use of the latest no-till equipment. At least six different cover crops used in row-crop fields will be shown in a separate demonstration plot. Presentations will begin at 9 a.m. Lunch will be provided by the Harrison County Cattlemen. The day will conclude by 2 p.m.

There is no charge for the day, but pre-registration is required by June 11 for the noon meal. The program [brochure and registration form are available online](#) at www.extension.iastate.edu/harrison and at the Harrison County office. Registration can be completed by e-mailing csgorham@iastate.edu. Registrations also may be faxed to (712) 644-2100 or be mailed to ISU Extension Harrison County, 304 East 7 St., Logan, IA 51546. For more information contact the Harrison County Extension Office at (888) 644-2105.

This event is sponsored by NRCS, ISU Extension and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) in Harrison, Pottawattamie and Shelby counties. Sponsors for the day include the Farm Bureau, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Cargill Ag Horizons, Farmers & Merchants State Bank, Midstates Bank, Shelby County State Bank, Heller Implement, Brokaw Equipment, United Bank of Iowa, the Iowa Soybean Association, A&M Green Power, Titan Machinery, Heartland Technology Solutions, Sorensen Equipment Company and Arbor Bank.

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Brush Management for Acreage Owners : Recognize and Control Invasive Woody Plants

By Robert Hartzler, Weed Specialist, Iowa State University Extension

Iowa's natural areas are under attack by exotic plants that degrade these valuable spaces. Invasive plants displace native species, disrupt ecosystems and interfere with recreational uses of prairies, woodlands and other areas.

A number of factors contribute to the growing problem with invasive woody plants; however, disturbance is the universal factor that plays a key role in the success of these weedy plants. Since Iowa's few remaining natural habitats are highly fractured and often exposed to disturbances (grazing, logging, nutrient runoff, etc.), the threat of invasive plants is constant.

While a wealth of information is available to aid in identification and management of invasive woody plants, much of the information about control tactics is directed toward people experienced in weed management. This article and a future one will provide information appropriate for people who have little experience in controlling invasive woody plants.

Woody invasive plants of Iowa

Buckthorn - Several species of buckthorn are considered invasive in Iowa, but common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) is most prevalent. Buckthorn plants are commonly found on the edges of wooded areas and are easily spotted in the spring or fall since they leaf out earlier and retain their leaves later than native trees. Buckthorn is a shrub or small tree that can reach heights of 25 feet. Leaves are oval and dark green with three to four pairs of curving veins. Twigs are usually tipped with a sharp spine, the source of the plant's name. A useful identification trait is the yellow/orange tissue found immediately under the bark.

Honeysuckle - There are several invasive honeysuckle species in Iowa. Honeysuckle plants form a clump of arching stems that can reach heights of 10 to 15 feet. Like buckthorn, they leaf out early and retain their leaves late into the fall. Leaves are arranged opposite on the stems and in the spring are light green. The bark is grey to tan in color with distinct stripes.

Multiflora rose - This plant was introduced as rootstock for cultivated varieties and planted for numerous purposes for many of which it was poorly suited. It grows best in open areas such as pastures and prairies, but can survive in wooded areas. Individual plants can reach heights greater than 10 feet. Multiflora rose can be differentiated from native roses by the fringed stipules present at the base of leaf petioles (small, leaflike appendages at the point where the leaf stem attaches to the supporting branch). Native roses have stipules, but they have smooth margins.

Control strategies

Several control tactics are effective against woody plants. The most appropriate method varies depending on plant size, density, type of habitat and time of year. Smaller plants often can be pulled from the soil by hand or with specially designed tools. Mechanical removal of the brush or tree is an effective tactic, although many weedy species will re-sprout following removal of the stem. Repeated mowing can be effective against brushy species such as multiflora rose. Herbicides can be used to control re-sprouting. Three distinct types of herbicide treatments are commonly used to control woody plants: cut surface application, basal bark application and foliar application. Herbicide treatment will be covered in a future article. *Acknowledgement: Loren Lown, Polk County Conservation Board, provided valuable assistance in developing this article.*

June is Dairy Month

Take a minute to appreciate all the ways you use dairy products in your diet, from the cool glass of milk, to your favorite sour cream dip for chips or veggies. Here are some easy recipes to help you celebrate Dairy Month!

SOUTH OF THE BORDER DIP - 16 SERVINGS

Celebrate June Dairy Month AND Veggie Month with this easy dip.

- 1 cup nonfat sour cream
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 cup nonfat plain yogurt

Mix the sour cream, yogurt, and salsa. Chill; serve cold with bite sized vegetables, or baked chips.

Each 2 tablespoon serving: 25 calories, 0 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 1.7 mg cholesterol, 130 mg sodium, 5 g carbohydrate, 0.3 g fiber, 1.6 g protein. Cost/serving = \$.15 Source: Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Program

STRAWBERRY YOGURT SHAKE- SERVES 2

Enjoy this great combination of fruit and low fat dairy.

- 1/2 cup unsweetened pineapple juice
- 3/4 cup plain low fat yogurt
- 1 1/2 cups frozen, unsweetened strawberries
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Add ingredients in order listed to blender container. Puree at medium speed until thick and smooth.

Each shake: 130 calories, 1.4 g fat, 0.8 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 61 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 2.5 g fiber, 4.7 g protein. Cost/serving = \$.90 Source: www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

FAST AND FABULOUS FRUIT DESSERT - SERVES 8

This is a fast dessert/fruit salad that will become a family and potluck favorite. Change the look and taste by using different fruits. In the summer, take advantage of strawberries, blueberries, peaches and apricots. In the fall and winter, use bananas, grapes, kiwi, pomegranate seeds or canned fruit that is drained and rinsed.

- 1 box (1.3 oz.) sugar free-fat free instant vanilla pudding mix
- 8 oz. fat free vanilla yogurt
- 2 cups non-fat milk
- 2 cups fruit (bite size pieces)

In a medium bowl, combine milk and pudding. Beat with wire whisk for 2 minutes. Gently mix yogurt with pudding mixture. Finally, gently fold fruit into mixture. Refrigerate until ready to serve, at least 5 minutes, though 30 minutes would be better.

Each 2/3 cup serving: 57 calories, 0.3 g fat, 0.1 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 1.6 mg cholesterol, 211 mg sodium, 10.5 g carbohydrate, 0.7 g fiber, 3.3 g protein. Cost/serving = \$.35 Source: Adapted from University of Massachusetts Extension