



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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WEST 13th STORE

2707 West 13th St. N.
Wichita, KS 67203
316-942-1443

EAST STORE

6225 E. Shadybrook
(21st @ Woodlawn)
Wichita, KS 67203
316-687-5451

RIDGE ROAD STORE

802 N. Ridge Rd.
Wichita, KS 67212
316-943-0494

LANDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION NIGHTSCAPING

316-943-6886

CORPORATE OFFICE

316-942-3751

TOLL-FREE NUMBER

888-542-8463

EMAIL

askus@johnsonsgarden.com

WEB PAGE

www.johnsonsgarden.com

Across the Fruited Plains

Jason Rogers, Johnson's West Nursery Manager, Kansas Certified Nurseryman

What? Grow fruit trees in Kansas? Often, a fruit tree might as well be just another ornamental flowering tree because neither you nor Mother Nature can ever seem to muster enough strength to produce any fruit worth eating. No wonder the beautiful spring flowering fruit tree is sometimes referred to as an ornamental.

But if you desire to plant a fruit tree, or just want to revive the old fruit tree that hasn't been taken care of in years, be comforted by the fact that there are several orchards in Kansas. They are successful not because they have fallen into good favor with Mother Nature, but because they spend time taking care of their trees.

The most important aspect of fruit tree care is a regular, faithful spray cycle. The spray cycle recommended by Johnson's Garden Center is as follows.

Start in March with ferti•lome Scalecide. Apply Scalecide as the weather begins to warm up and our first few nights are above freezing. This application kills overwintering insects, mites and fungus living in the cracks and under the bark of your tree.

Then apply Hi-Yield Lime Sulphur Spray any time before the point of the bud break. This is key in preventing Peach Leaf Curl.

April brings the beginning stages of fruit production. Apply ferti•lome Fruit Tree Spray when 80% of the flower petals have fallen to the ground, and reapply weekly until four weeks after the fruit has begun to form. This prevents further insect damage. Continue to spray with ferti•lome Fruit Tree Spray every two weeks up until the time of harvest.

In November, apply ferti•lome Scalecide after the leaves have fallen in order to protect the tree against overwintering insects, mites and other problems such as rust.

It is possible to grow good healthy fruit in the great State of Kansas but it does require some dedication. But the treasures a well-taken-care-of fruit tree affords will be your wonderful reward.