



Johnson's Garden Talk

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

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June 2005



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Garden Tips

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After-Planting Summer Care

Many of us have planted summer-flowering annuals, perennials and ornamental shrubs to enhance the landscape. Others have also replaced trees that were damaged by what is now called the "worst ice storm in our area's history." Like many of you, I found it a good time to remove trees that had previous storm damage or trees that had declined for other reasons. I removed some Bradford Pears that had been great trees at one time, but were not the specimens they once were.

Our newly installed plants need some help this summer to get them established. Hopefully, your plants were planted properly using Cotton Boll Compost, ferti•lome Start-N-Grow plant food, MYKE® beneficial fungi; and mulched properly with cedar or cypress mulch. You may still add the Start-N-Grow and MYKE if you didn't at planting time. Be sure to keep mulch around your plants to conserve moisture and prevent competition from weeds and turf.

The most common mistake is an incorrect amount of water given to new plants. Overwatering is probably the cause of most plant casualties. Make sure that your turf sprinklers are adjusted to not give too much water to newly planted trees and shrubs. Water your plants only when they are dry. If plants were watered three days ago and properly mulched they may not need water today. If it is 95°+ and the wind is blowing 40 mph in July, your plants may need water every day. Stick your finger in the soil and see if it is in need of water.

Drip Irrigation

Be sure to attend our drip irrigation seminar on Sat., June 25. We can help you design an inexpensive system that gives plants the correct amount of water at the root zone. This free seminar will show you how to save both money and water—our most precious natural resource. Drip irrigation may be added to your existing in-ground system if you have a zone that's not in use. You can also install an inexpensive battery operated water timer to any outdoor faucet to operate your drip system automatically while you're away. Either way, drip makes your gardening much more enjoyable.

Iron Chlorosis

Last summer, we started offering a service to correct yellowing of leaves in Pin Oaks. This spring, we are starting to see the results of the nutrients we applied this past fall. If you would like more information about this service, call 943-6886 and let us tell you about our chlorosis treatment. You can also visit our website at www.johnsonsgarden.com/newsletter/pinoaks_sept04.pdf to check out the article in last fall's newsletter. If you have a Pin Oak, Sweet Gum or any tree that has pale green leaves, this treatment may be the long-term solution to your problem. If left untreated,

Pin Oaks seem to go into decline and have trouble with scale and other insects. Invest in your trees today and have healthy trees for the future.

Impressive Hostas

The plants I'm most impressed with this spring are the hostas. (Is *hosta* the plural for multiple *hosta* plants?!) I planted several varieties last summer and they did fine, but this year, WOW, stand back! They have really grown and are spectacular. I use Sluggo, a safe organic product to keep slugs off of my hostas. Sluggo is actually a plant food that kills slugs, but won't harm animals. I'm sure that you have an area with afternoon shade that is the perfect spot for new hostas ... or is it *hosta*?

5-Year MYKE Warranty

If you are unsure about planting this summer because of the heat, remember our 5-year nursery stock warranty when planting with MYKE Tree & Shrub. MYKE contains mycorrhizal fungi which colonize on the root system of most plants. MYKE helps the plant absorb more water and nutrients. At Johnson's we carry four different types of MYKE to aid in planting not only trees and shrubs, but also annuals, perennials, vegetables and indoor plants as well. Check our 2005 Plant Guide on page 93 for a full explanation of the MYKE products.

Phoenix Grills

"What is a garden center doing selling cooking appliances?" you might ask. I thought the same thing last fall when we found these at a trade show. But they are not just your regular gas grill. The Phoenix Grill Co., with over 100 years of manufacturing experience, crafts the highest quality and performance grills in the industry.

I have two issues with my old grill. #1, the flare-ups that happen when the meat is cooking. If I go in to watch TV (Lance Armstrong in the Tour de France on OLN TV) the flare-ups begin and the meat is overcooked. With Phoenix, its unique drip pan directs grease into the collector bucket, virtually eliminating flare-ups. And #2, cleaning the messy lava rock that catches all of the drippings. Now tell me, who likes to clean up that mess? I don't. With the Phoenix Grill, there is no lava rock to clean up. All of the drippings are collected in a drip pan/heat deflector.

Phoenix Grills have a great warranty and assembly is a snap. Attach the handles and it is good to go. Stop by the stores June 10-12 to visit with our Phoenix factory rep, Jeff Masters, who will be here for cooking demos. Or come by this summer and maybe we'll have the grills fired up and be serving samples. For more information, see page 4 of this newsletter and visit www.phoenixgrill.com.

My favorite things to grill (so far) have been baby back ribs and chicken breasts. I can't wait to try the good ol' American favorite—a hot dog on the grill. I sprinkle on my favorite meat rub, E.B.'s Luv Rub "The Grillmaster's Choice." E.B. is a nurseryman from New Madrid, Missouri who owns a truck stop (he refers to it as a "Travel Center") where he sells the world's best meat rub. Stop by one of our stores to pick up a free sample of E.B.'s Luv Rub—but you have to ask for it!

Come visit us this summer for the latest in summer-flowering plants ... or for advice if something is attacking your lawn or favorite plant. We can help, as we've been helping Wichita gardeners for four generations. ■