

Answers to Spring Homeowner Problems

Over the last few days, there have been a number of clients contacting Purdue Extension asking questions about weeds that are impacting their lawn and issues with their fruit trees. If you have a question like these, or any other question related to growing plants, identifying insects, issues with ponds, livestock production, or agriculture, feel free to contact Purdue Extension. You can contact Purdue Extension by calling (765)-653-8411, emailing smith535@purdue.edu, visiting our office located at 12 Central Square in Greencastle, or commenting on our Facebook page: Purdue Extension-Putnam County.

Here are some of the answers to the questions which have been coming into the Extension Office over the last few days, starting with how to prevent dandelions. Dandelions are best controlled in the fall. However, it is sometimes hard to remember to treat your lawn then, in order to control something you don't see until the next spring. If you need to treat your lawn for dandelions, try to do it in the cooler spring months (by mid-May if possible) by using ester formulations of broadleaf herbicides or by using florasulam. Remember, when using an herbicide, you need to read and follow all label instructions. Also, if you do not want to use a herbicide to control weeds, then one way to help control dandelions is by having a healthy lawn. A healthy lawn can be achieved by fertilizing in the fall and mowing to a proper height of 3 to 3.5 inches.

Many of the questions coming in about fruit trees involve spraying them with fungicides. The best resource that Purdue Extension can provide about spraying fruit trees is the 2015 Midwest Tree Fruit Guide. In the guide, it provides information about when to properly spray your trees, what to spray them with, and some precautions about utilizing pesticides. You can obtain your own copy of the 2015 Midwest Tree Fruit Guide at: <https://ag.purdue.edu/hla/Hort/Documents/ID-168.pdf>

The other topic related to fruit trees that we have been receiving questions about is the Eastern Tent Caterpillars. They are a nuisance which defoliates trees and make webs in trees. They are two inches long and are black with a white stripe down their back. If you find them in their web and are able to reach the web, then you should just pull it out and put it in some warm soapy water. If they aren't in the web, then you can squash them or once again, put them in warm soapy water. If soapy water isn't your ideal control method and you are open to using insecticide, then look for an insecticide with the active ingredient of: Spinosad, Bacillus thuringiensis, acephate, carbaryl, permethrin, cyfluthrin, or deltamethrin.

In the coming weeks feel free to stop by Purdue Extension to pick up information about Adult Open Class at the fair and exhibiting in Harris Hall. You can also obtain information these two activities on the Purdue Extension Putnam County website or the Putnam County Fairgrounds website. Entering exhibits in either of these two facilities at the fair is open to anyone in

Putnam County. There will also be information about exhibiting in Harris Hall at the Putnam County Master Gardener Plant Auction on May 30 at the fairgrounds.

Visit our homepage at www.extension.purdue.edu/putnam or you can contact the local Purdue Extension Office by calling 765.653.8411 for more information regarding this week's column topic or to RSVP for upcoming events. It is always best to call first to assure items are ready when you arrive and to RSVP for programs. While many publications are free, some do have a fee. Purdue University is an equal access/equal opportunity institution. All times listed are Eastern Time.

Upcoming Events:

- May 15 Last possible day to sign up for 4-H Camp subject to availability
- May 15 FAMACHA Workshop registration deadline
- May 15 Livestock 4-H Enrollment Deadline (except poultry and rabbit meat pen)
- May 20 Selecting Garden Plants & Planting, Library, 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
- May 30 Master Gardener Plant Auction, Fairgrounds, 10:00 am
- June 1 State Fair 4-H Entry Deadline
- June 2 FAMACHA Workshop, Fairgrounds, 6:00 pm