

August Yard Of The Month Announced

Awesome, beautiful, colorful and amazing describe the gardens at the Schindlers' yard, 1017 W. 11th Street in Yankton. Pink hibiscus, white coneflowers, sedum, phlox and various other plantings, give the garden contrast and texture. A huge hosta bed grows under the shade trees in the North-west corner of the yard. An antique plow makes the area look picture perfect with plantings of an evergreen shrub, sedum and a variety of grasses. Front yard pots are accented by gazing balls, old wheels and a blue bird bath. A long row of vinca flowers complete the nice look of togetherness in the yard. A large spruce tree in the front of the house provides shade and privacy. The east side of the house contains numerous coelus making the area a wave of color. Thank you to the Schindlers contribution for helping Keep Yankton Beautiful.

Master Gardener's Plant Sale Is Sept. 7

The Missouri Valley Master Gardeners' sixth annual plant sale will be held on Saturday, Sept. 7, at the Territorial Capitol Building, Riverside Park, Yankton. Hours are from 8 a.m. until noon. Proceeds will be used for future projects and events in the community.

Extension Offers Tips on Strawberry Care

BROOKINGS — It is hard to beat the taste of fresh strawberries! Have you been enjoying strawberries from your own patch? Rhoda Burrows, Extension Horticulture Specialist shares some tips for keeping your strawberry plants healthy and productive. What strawberries like "Strawberries require full-sun. A sandy loam with pH 5 — 7 is optimal, but they can be grown on a variety of soil types, provided the soil is well drained and good quality water is used for irrigation. Irrigate as needed so the plants will receive about an inch of water/week, especially in August during runner development," Burrows said. She added that gardeners need to be careful not to use water with a high sodium or salt content for irrigation; artesian water or well water should be used only if you know it is of good quality with under 700-900 ppm salts. "To maintain your planting over time, you need to know what kind of strawberries you have, Junebearing, Everbearing or Day-Neutral," Burrows said.

Below she explains describes the three species: Junebearing strawberries are the most common type of strawberry grown in South Dakota. These strawberries initiate runners to form new plants during midsummer under long daylengths, and initiate flower buds in the fall under short daylengths. They produce one crop of fruit in the early summer between June and mid-July, depending on the variety. Honeoye, Sparkle, and Jewel are examples of Junebearing types. Everbearing strawberries tend to produce most heavily in the spring and less in the fall. They produce fewer runners than Junebearing types. Fort Laramie and Ogallala are two popular Everbearing strawberry varieties. Day-neutral strawberries are a type of everbearing strawberry that can fruit from June through the first frost. They also form few runners. Under cooler conditions, the Day-neutrals can produce fruit more uniformly throughout the season compared to the everbearing types. However, they do not form flower buds at temperatures above 85°F, so they tend to stop producing during mid-summer heat. Tribute and Tristar are two examples of day-neutral strawberries.

Growing Junebearing Types: Remove all flower blossoms during the first year of the planting to allow the plant to put energy into developing healthy roots and crowns and vigorous runners. In the following years, immediately after the season's final harvest (and by the end of July), renovate the rows to maintain plant vigor and production.

Do not renovate beds in August, as this is too late. However, you can thin out overgrown plantings a bit and re-establish walking paths if your planting needs renovation and you have missed the time frame to do so. If the planting becomes too dense, berry size and yield are reduced and disease can become a problem. If the beds have become too weedy, consider removing them and establishing a new planting.

Nitrogen fertilizer can be applied to Junebearing types in July to promote runner development and establishment. "Don't apply nitrogen earlier in the spring, as that can cause softened fruit and/or increased disease," she said.

Flower buds of Junebearing strawberries are formed in early September. Burrows said these buds can be injured by temperatures below 15 degrees Fahrenheit, so the plants should be mulched to protect them over winter.

"Studies have shown that once the soil temperature stays below 40 degrees Fahrenheit consistently, the crowns are dormant and mulch can be applied," she said.

Straw is preferred since it does not pack down; leaves or grass clippings may smother the plants. Remove the straw in the spring once temperatures stay above 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Be sure to remove the straw before the strawberry leaves begin to turn yellow," she said.

Ever-bearing/Day Neutral Types: Remove flower blossoms and any runners that may appear, for about 6 weeks after planting. Once the plants have 5 to 6 fully expanded leaves, the flowers may be allowed to remain and set fruit.

"In contrast to the Junebearing types, Everbearing/Day-neutral types are most productive their first year, and can be grown as an annual," Burrows said. "In fact, most large commercial strawberry fields are now grown as an annual crop. Also in contrast to the Junebearing types, fertilizer for day-neutral strawberries should be applied in smaller amounts every few weeks during the growing season — except during the hottest part of the summer."

It's Bean Season

How To Harvest And Choose The Best

BROOKINGS — This is the season for fresh green beans. Mary Roduner, SDSU Extension Consumer Horticulture Field Specialist shares tips on how to select beans when buying them at the farmers market or when to pick them from your own garden so you get beans with the best flavor and nutrition. "Depending on variety, mature beans can be any size from 4-inches to 8-inches long with flat or round pods," Roduner said. She explained that standard beans like Kentucky Wonder, Provider, Tendergreen, or Cherokee Yellow Wax beans have 6-inch long medium round pods. Specialty beans like Mountaineer White Half-Runner beans are 4-inches long with medium round pods, while French Filet beans are 6-7-inches long with very thin round pods. Roma or Italian style beans have flat pods up to 8-inches long and 1-inch wide.

THREE PHASES OF MATURITY

"Beans go through three phases as they mature," she said. "Immature beans are very dark green or green-yellow in yellow varieties, pods are very thin and when cut horizontally there is no evidence of seed formation." When picked immaturely, Roduner said the pods will wilt very quickly and have a



Pictured are immature, mature and overmature bean pods.

PHOTO COURTESY IGROW.ORG

thin weak flavor. Whereas, mature beans have a vibrant medium green or bright yellow color, are firmly round or flat with the beginnings of seed development and snap crisply when broken. The flavor is rich and full with a juicy sweetness.

She added that beans that are over mature develop large white seeds; fiber in the pod and the pod color becomes pale and dull. Pods will develop large "bumps" caused by the developing seeds. Over mature beans have a starchy taste and many varieties develop stringy fibers that make

them difficult or unpleasant to chew.

Roduner suggested picking bean pods routinely to keep the plants producing longer - every two to three days for standard varieties and one to two days for filet beans.

"As soon as the bean pods mature, hormones are released telling the plant to stop producing blooms and pods, causing the pods to dry and seeds to harden," she said. "Beans can be harvested at the mature stage (large firm seeds) for "shelly beans" which are shelled or removed from the pods and

cooked 4-5 minutes until they are soft. These beans have a starchy flavor that is fresher than dried beans. Pods can also be left on the plant to dry completely and be used as dry beans."

When choosing beans at a farmers market or the grocery store, Roduner said to look for beans that are firm, with no blemishes, and snap sharply when broken. The color should be vibrant with no bumps or bulges from developing seeds.

Fresh bean season is short, so enjoy them now. To learn more, visit iGrow.org.

Aphids On Trees Can Be An Annoying Problem

BROOKINGS — Aphids are appearing on many trees at this time of year, and many tree owners are calling John Ball, SDSU Extension Forestry Field Specialist to find out if their infested trees are OK.

Ball said that in most cases, although the sticky honeydew the aphids create can be annoying, aphids don't cause much harm to trees.

"The aphid population is usually not high enough to do much harm," he said. "The problem is just an annoyance to have to clear the honeydew from car windshield and patio furniture."

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE APHIDS IN MY TREES?

"Aphid's activity is generally marked by the abundance of honeydew they excrete on the lower leaves and any plants or objects beneath the tree," Ball said. "I usually get calls from tree owners concerned about their weeping tree and what they are referring to is the

sticky liquid that is covering anything beneath the tree."

He added that walnuts seem to be particularly attractive to aphids and are one of the most common hosts he hears about.

There are two aphids, or their host injury, that are commonly seen this time of year: the woolly elm aphid and the poplar vagabond aphid. Ball shares what signs to look for and which treatment options will work — if any are necessary.

WOOLY ELM APHID

Another aphid Ball receives calls about this time of year is the woolly elm aphid.

"The feeding by the nymphs and adult aphids causes the young leaves to swell and curl around the

colony," he said. "The aphids usually do not harm the tree. The only problem is the honeydew that rains down on objects beneath the tree."

Since the aphids are living in a curled leaf, Ball said most insecticides are ineffective as they work on contact and none of the pesticide contacts them. He said the best control is through the use of systemic insecticides such as imidacloprid that are applied as a soil drench and kill the insects as they feed on the sap.

These insecticides must be put on the tree before the problem is noticed as it can take up to 30 days before they begin working.

POPLAR VAGABOND APHID

Ball recently received a picture of the gall formed by the poplar vagabond aphid.

"This aphid overwinters as eggs that hatch as the shoots are expanding," he said. "The leaves at the tips are the feeding site for the nymphs and as they suck the sap from this foliage the leaves turn reddish and become deformed. This deformed leaves are hollow and form the gall."

Ball explained that the adult aphids are leaving these galls now and flying off to their other host, grasses, where they feed on the roots.

"Another generation of aphids develops there and the new adults return to lay eggs on the poplars in the autumn," he said.

Ball said that although the galls are common on cottonwoods and quaking aspens; they do not harm the tree.

"Once you see the galls it is too late for any control," he said.

To learn more, visit iGrow.org.

Black-Eyed Susans: Grow An Old Favorite

BROOKINGS — Black-eyed Susans or Rudbeckia are an old favorite plant of many gardeners. They are prized for their bright yellow or orange flowers with the dark brown center that are borne in abundance from early summer until a hard freeze, explained David Graper, SDSU Extension Horticulture Specialist and director of McCrory Gardens.

"Rudbeckias are also very easy to grow when planted in a sunny location," he said, adding that there are many different types to choose from. "Two of the most common are Rudbeckia hirta and Rudbeckia fulgida."

Of the two, Graper said Rudbeckia hirta is the most common.

"It is sometimes also known as the gloriosa daisy. The typical plant grows 14 to 24-inches tall with fairly large yellow to orange flowers with a raised, dark brown, central cone," he said. "Some flowers will also have dark brown patches on the flower petals near the central cone. Those flowers were probably most commonly associated with the name gloriosa daisy."

He added that there are dozens of different varieties of Rudbeckia hirta with a wide variation in flower color, ranging from the typical yellow to dark brown or red and with central cones that might be dark brown or green. Some varieties may also have single or double flowers.

Height can also vary quite a bit too, depending on the variety. Some only grow about a foot tall while others may reach

close to 30-inches. Both the leaves and stems are covered by short bristly hairs that give them a rough feeling texture.

"Many gardeners consider them to be perennials but in fact, most plants do not survive our winters. Rather new plants grow up from seed that was dropped by plants the previous year making it appear that they are perennial," he said. "So, plant black-eyed Susans in the spring but don't be surprised if the plants appear in slightly different locations or if the flower color changes a bit as the offspring from a hybrid will not often come back looking exactly the same as the parent."

He also explained that if gardeners deadhead their plants, it might improve the appearance of the plants, however, it will also reduce the chance of the plants self-seeding and coming back the next spring.

Rudbeckia fulgida is a less common type of black-eyed Susan but it is one that is generally perennial, Graper said, and it seldom spreads from its own seeds.

"The most commonly planted cultivar is called is Rudbeckia fulgida var. sullivantii 'Goldsturm'. It has bright yellow flowers with the dark brown cone. The flowers are usually smaller than in Rudbeckia hirta but can have many more flowers," he said. "It begins flowering in July and may continue flowering all summer. It also tends to have a more mounded growth habit than Rudbeckia hirta which stands more upright. The leaves are usually

more rounded in appearance, especially near the base of the plant. The stem and leaves are nearly smooth too."

ASTER YELLOWS

Rudbeckias are, in general, relatively free of pest problems, Graper said.

"However, they may have an occasional aphid infestation and some are prone to powdery mildew which is not usually a serious problem for the plants. Aster yellows is a disease that can be severe in Rudbeckia, as well as any plant in the Aster family and other plants. It is caused by an organism called a phytoplasma and is spread by leaf hoppers," he said.

Once a plant gets the disease, there is no treatment for it except to pull out the plant before the disease has a chance to spread to other plants. The most common symptoms are for flowers to turn green and even have leafy shoots developing out of the flowers. The plants will also be stunted and have a yellowish appearance.

"Last year was one of the worst years I have seen for aster yellows in Rudbeckia and Echinacea," he said. "Perhaps the numbers of leaf hoppers was higher than usual with the hot dry weather. Spraying for the leaf hoppers can help reduce the chance of spread."

Whichever of these plants you decide to grow; they will brighten your garden for years to come. They also work well as a cutflower.

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