

## **Yard and Garden - 04-21-2012 - Ted Griess / Extension Horticulture Assistant**

Of late, if asked what state I am in, I along with many gardeners would probably answer the state of confusion. Beginning early in March, weather conditions were extremely abnormal. Outdoor temperatures reached the high 80's during the day and remained in the 50's and 60's during the evenings. All this occurred weeks before spring officially arrived. The summer-like conditions caused plants to awaken quickly from their winter's nap. Many flowering trees and shrubs bloomed a good month before they normally would have, and the standard calendar for lawn care and yard work was turned upside down. Crabgrass and other weeds abruptly emerged catching most homeowners off guard.

It is now mid-April. Perhaps things are returning to normal. Weather conditions seem to be occurring in a more orderly fashion. One lawn care question I am frequently hearing is, "When should I start fertilizing my lawn?" Although I can boldly declare that window presently to be open, I do realize a certain degree of bewilderment still exists. Not knowing what type of fertilizer is best to use, how much to use and how to correctly apply it adds to one's state of confusion. Worry not. I have a great solution.

On Tuesday, April 24, at 6:30 p.m. Extension Educator David Lott from West Central Research and Extension Center in North Platte and Extension Educator Elizabeth Killinger from Hall County will be in Kearney at the Buffalo County Extension Building to present a workshop entitled "*Green Up*." You are cordially invited. The workshop is open to the public free of charge. For those working on their Master Gardener certifications, the time spent attending this workshop will count toward continuing education requirements.

The *Green Up* workshop will give attendees a hands-on experience. Students will learn about the chemical formulation in a bag of fertilizer. Practical problems will be worked out at the workshop to provide attendees formulations they can use in their own personal situations. Students will also gain knowledge about how much fertilizer to apply to a lawn and what formulations work best in the vegetable garden, container garden and flowerbeds.

As an added bonus, Drew Anderson and Tee Bush, horticulture professionals from the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) at Curtis, Nebraska, will also teach through practical demonstration how to calibrate a drop-style fertilizer spreader. They will also demonstrate how to properly clean small spray tanks and check for residue. These demonstrations are designed to help homeowners minimize chemical waste, reduce water contamination and save money. Attendees will receive an assortment of publications covering the activities demonstrated throughout the evening.

A large turnout is expected. In order to have adequate numbers of publications available and arrange for sufficient seating, you are asked to RSVP by noon, Monday, April 23, 2012. Either call the Buffalo County Extension office at 308-236-1235 or drop Elizabeth Killinger or me an email. Email addresses are [ekillinger2@unl.edu](mailto:ekillinger2@unl.edu) or [tgriess2@unl.edu](mailto:tgriess2@unl.edu)

Please join us. Together we can leave that state of confusion and enter a gardening world of confidence.