

**Ag. News**

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**Preparing For Fall**

Even though we have received some recent rainfall in the area, we have also experienced extreme drought for most of this summer, it is very important to continue watering through the fall and winter months. Water trees, shrubs, lawns, and perennials during prolonged dry fall and winter periods to prevent root damage that affects the health of the entire plant. The result of long, dry periods during fall and winter is injury or death to parts of plant root systems. Affected plants may appear perfectly normal and resume growth in the spring using stored food energy. Plants may be weakened and all or parts may die in late spring or summer when temperatures rise. Weakened plants also may be subject to insect and disease problems.

Fall is also the time fruit tree care is forgotten or neglected, but it's a critical time for controlling some of the peach and plum tree diseases to insure a good crop next year. Applying a copper fungicide now can stop or at least reduce three of the major diseases that attack peach and plum trees in Wise County. Those diseases are peach leaf curl, bacterial leaf spot and bacterial canker. Timing of the fall spray is critical for effective control and for avoiding tree damage. Unless applied correctly, copper, a metal, may cause severe defoliation. Spraying should be done when 70 percent of the leaves have fallen.

*Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national orientation. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.*

Another problem many homeowners are experiencing this fall is in St. Augustine grass. Brown patch is a chronic lawn problem for many Wise County residents. This fungal disease is characterized by large, circular, brown patches of grass. Since it is a fungus, fungicides can be helpful. Granular fungicides are easier to apply than liquid and they have longer residual. Inspect your lawn, if the blades pull away easily from the stem and have a gray, rotted appearance, that is a sure symptom of the disease.

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