

Hotline Training



Miami Co.
Extension Master Gardeners
January 29, 2013

Topics for today

- Hotline Purpose
- The Diagnostic Interview
- Interview practice
- Sources of information
- Addressing lingering concerns...
- Secrets to being an “Expert”

Hotline Purpose

Why do we do this??

- Stated mission of the Extension service:
 - To provide research-based information to the public.
 - “The information source you can trust”
- Marketing and Public Relations Tool
 - For Extension Service
 - For EMG program itself

How do we meet this mission?

- Remember that you are representing K-State, not popular opinion
- Be professional and personable at all times
- Continue updating your knowledge
 - Advanced training
 - Subscribe to weekly KSU Hortnews

The Diagnostic Interview

Be Approachable

- Dress for success—gardener style!
- Acknowledge caller/visitor immediately
- Use positive body language
- Use a friendly phone voice
- “Miami County Extension Master Gardener Hotline. This is Name.”

Ask for Their Question

- Adults are often reluctant to ask for help.
- The first question may not be the “real” question.

Ask Your Own Questions

- Use Helpful Questions List
- Closed-ended Questions
 - Answered by yes/no/single word or short phrase
 - Do you routinely water your lawn?
 - What type of tree is it?

Ask More Questions

- Open-ended Questions
 - Answered with complete sentences and longer explanation.
 - Tell me about your lawn watering routine.
 - Describe how the tree looks.

Be an Active Listener

- Use encouragers
 - Hmmmm....
 - That's interesting
 - Then what happened?
- Feel their pain
 - You must be frustrated! You watered your lawn correctly and it still has brown spots.
 - How sad that your beautiful tree is looking sickly!

Restate The Question

- Verify that you are listening
- Clarify what they are asking
- Restate the data you have collected
 - So you have watered your lawn 1" a week but it still looks brown so we need to figure out what else is wrong.
 - You haven't seen any insects, but there are holes in the tree's leaves.

Provide the Answer

- Give them the answer if you know it
- Tailor your details to the individual
- Use research-based information
- Include good garden maintenance information along with diagnosis
- Look for “teachable moments”
- Cite your source
- Offer handout if available

If You Don't Know the Answer

- Offer to do research
 - A delayed correct answer is better than an immediate wrong answer!
- Use Hold button sparingly
- Collect their contact information—
check it twice!
- Give them a time frame commitment
for your follow-up

Check for Satisfaction

- Ask if the answer satisfies their need
- Ask if they have any further questions on this issue
- Ask if they have any other questions
 - This is optional depending on time constraints!
- Remind them that we are here if they need us in the future.

Time to Practice

- Find a Partner
- Questioner—Think of a garden problem you have experienced
- Answerer—Ask at least
 - 5 closed ended questions
 - 5 open ended questions
 - Hear their pain!
 - Provide possible answers
 - Check for satisfaction
- Trade roles

Hotline Resources

- K-State fact sheets and newsletter
- K-State Common Plant Problems
- Library books
- Computer research
- Other EMGs
- Extension Staff

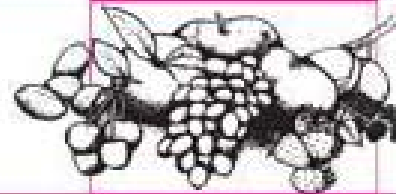
K-State Publications

KSN HORTICULTURE REPORT



PRUNING FRUIT TREES

Frank Lautner



BY
ALAN GRB

Fruit trees should be pruned every year. When you plant a fruit tree, you should be as dedicated to giving the tree proper care and pruning as you are eager to enjoy quality, fresh fruit. It is important to understand the principles of pruning, and to practice them. Don't be afraid to prune. Just prune for a specific purpose. The objectives are to:

- Develop strong tree structure. This should begin when trees are planted and continued each year thereafter.
- Provide for light penetration. Penetration of the sun is necessary for fruit buds to develop and fruit to mature properly.
- Control tree size. Most fruit trees require pruning to control branch spread and tree height.
- Remove damaged wood. Some wood injury will occur each year from wind damage, frost winds, and diseases and insects.

PRUNING TOOLS

Pruning tools should always be sharp when pruning so clean cuts can be made. Cuts that result in bark tears, stubs, and a jagged surface are slow to heal, or they may not completely heal over.

1. Hand shears (Figure 1 A). A wicker type of hand shear is used to prune small stem wood - up to 1/2 inch diameter.
2. Loppers (Figure 1 B). Long handled loppers are used for cuts about 1/2 to 1 1/2 inch in diameter

and are usually needed by the third year of tree growth.

2. Use correct pruning saw (Figure 1 C). A saw will be needed for branches larger than 1 1/2 inch in size when pruning stems and loppers cannot reach.
3. Ladders. Avoid standing on tree limbs since it may damage the bark.
4. Pole pruner and/or pole saw. Long handled equipment is used to make cuts in high areas while standing on the ground.

WHEN TO PRUNE

The best time to prune is during late winter or early spring just prior to the beginning of active growth. You should prune during the late dormant period because:

- Wounds will heal quickly when growth begins.
- Unhealable branch cuts will often result in late pruned cuts in early years since there are bud leaves on the tree.
- Wound damaged wood is easier to identify at this time.
- The bark is less likely to tear when cuts are made.
- Trees pruned in early winter may be damaged by extreme temperatures that occur after pruning.

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
AND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Weekly Hort Newsletter

Horticulture Forestry and Recreation Resources - Extension>Horticulture Info. Center>-Hort. Newsletter - Mozilla Firefox

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www.hfrr.ksu.edu/p.aspx?tabid=764

Horticulture, Forestry & Recreation Resources
Kansas State University

Search

Extension>Horticulture Info. Center>-Hort. Newsletter

Home	Horticulture 2011 Newsletter	Newsletter By Date
About Us	All newsletters are in PDF format and will require Adobe Acrobat Reader for viewing which can be downloaded at www.adobe.com .	JANUARY
People	Newsletter Archives: 2010 2009 2008 2007	FEBRUARY
Students	NOVEMBER	MARCH
Alumni and Friends	November 8, 2011	APRIL
Instructional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Kansas Turfgrass Conference■ Pruning Shrubs■ Fall Care of Peonies■ Winterizing Roses■ Draining Hoses and Irrigation Lines■ Begin Rabbit Protection Now■ Winterizing Garden Hand Tools	
Research	November 1, 2011	
Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Luncheon Series presented by <i>Friends of the KSU Gardens</i>■ Cleaning up the Vegetable Garden for Next Year■ Apply Late-Season Nitrogen Application in November■ Tucking Your Lawnmower in for the Winter■ Prevention of Sunscald on Thin-Barked Trees■ Water the Compost Pile	
Upcoming events		
Horticulture Info. Center		
-Hort. Newsletter		
*2007		
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-Pest of the Week		
-Plant/Pest Problems		
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People		
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Common Plant Problems

<http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=586>

Aphids.pdf - Adobe Reader

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Tools Comment

KSTATE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION
Kansas State University

2021 Throckmorton Plant Sciences Center :: Kansas State University :: Manhattan, KS 66506 :: 785.532.6173

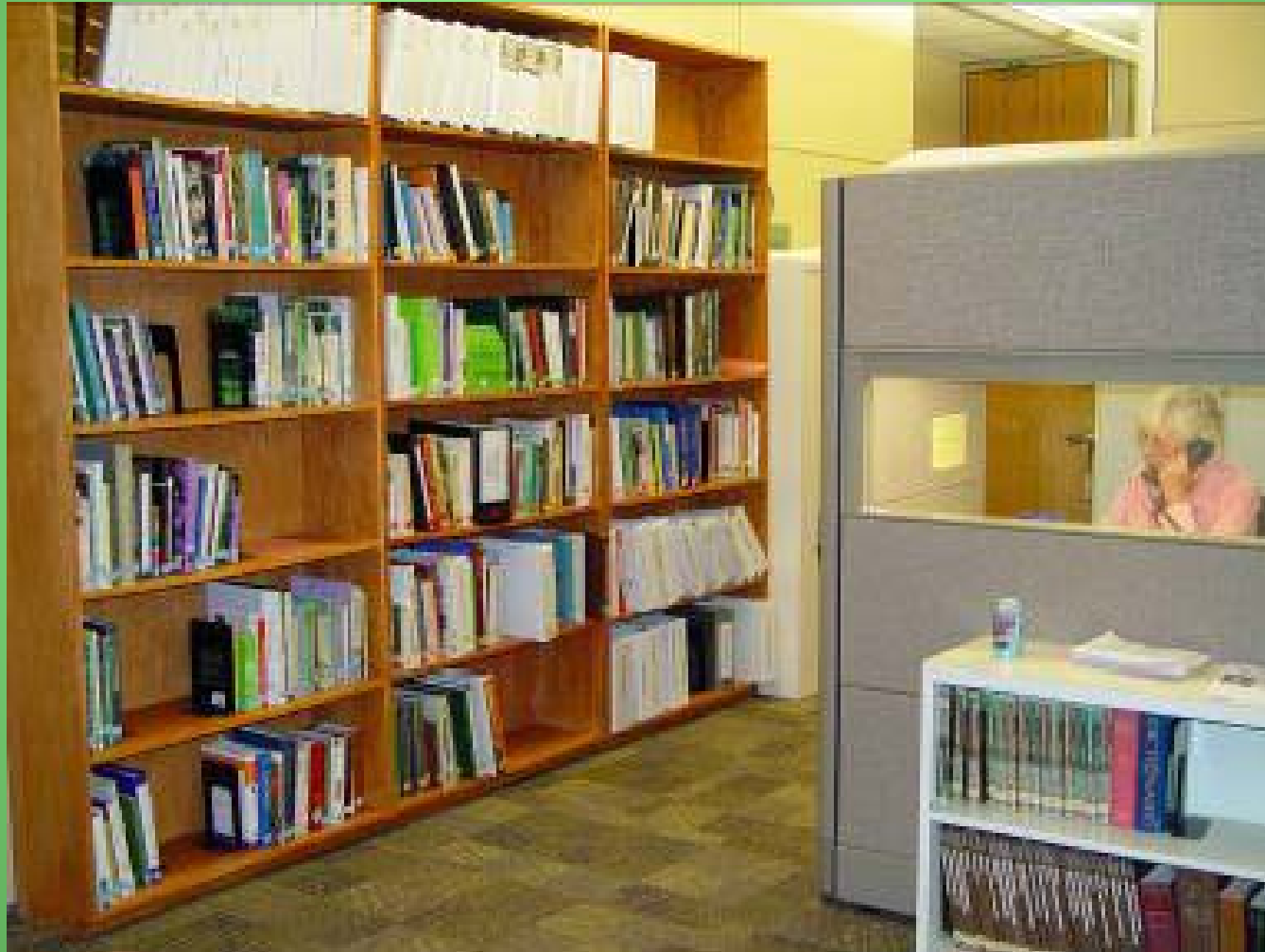
Problem: Aphids



Hosts: Aphids attack such a wide variety of plant material that it is not practical to list individual species.

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Good old books!



Computer Research

- To Google or Not to Google?
 - Enter search terms + Extension
- Preferred sites
 - Other Extension agencies
 - Especially in the Mid-west
 - Sites ending in .edu (Universities)
 - Sites ending in .gov (EPA, USDA)
 - Pesticide companies product info/labels/MSDS

Computer Research

- Web sites to avoid at ALL times
 - Chat lines, gardening forums
 - Personal opinions of non-scientists
 - Any site promoting folk/home remedies
- Gray areas—cite your source
 - Nursery's plant descriptions
 - Commercial sales sites

Challenging People

- Lonely widow(er)s
- Couples needing a mediator
- Arguers
- “But my lawn service guy told me...”
- Shooting the messenger

Working with Challenging People

- Tact & people skills
- Use Empathy--Hear their Pain!
- They don't have to like your answer
- Delegate to a higher authority
 - “This is what K-State research has found”
 - Pass on to Extension staff

Challenging Questions

- Vague descriptions
- Insufficient information
- Un-diagnosable problems
- Strange insects or diseases

Solutions to Challenging Questions

- Ask more questions
- Get samples or photos
- Use other EMG's
- Pass along to Extension staff

The Secrets of Being a Master Gardener "Expert"



Expert Secret #1

CLAIM YOUR AUTHORITY

Accept the role you are given.
You ARE a Master Gardener.

Expert Secret #2

PRACTICE EMPATHY

Hear their pain!

Expert Secret # 3

LISTEN

More than you talk!

This is not about you and your garden.

Expert Secret #4

BE HONEST

It's ok to say "I don't know" as long as you follow it up with "Let me see what I can find out!"

Expert Secret # 5

CITE YOUR SOURCE

Dirr's? KSU publication?

Personal experience?

Extension Agent?

Expert Secret #6

BE A LIFELONG LEARNER

The more you learn, the more expert
you will become!

Any more questions about
answering questions?

