

“Ask The Plant Groom”™ by Dale Groom, The Plant Groom™

For: QA 1057

I understand that Round Up and Wipe Out weed and grass killers only work on growing grasses and dissipate in a few days. Can I spray Round Up on my Bermuda grass lawn (before the Bermuda begins to "green up") in order to kill winter weeds? - A.W.

Round Up, Killzall and other glyphosates do not work their best during cold or even cool temperatures. Some folks do apply these products on totally dormant Bermuda to help control grassy and some broadleaf weeds. However, I would not recommend them for this purpose. Wipe Out, Weed Out, Weed-B-Gone and similar products containing the active ingredient Trimec are good broadleaf weed control aids for use during warm seasons but not for cool temperatures. Both products do not last long in or on the soil. My product group choice for weed control during cool temperatures is clover and winter grass control products.

Always apply these according to label directions. A compression or "pump up" type sprayer adjusted to a fine spray works best for application. Make sure the entire plant is sprayed for good results. Two to three applications a week apart may be necessary to achieve control.

Another way to help control your weeds this time of year is to mow those suckers low. Fertilize your lawn by the end of the month with a quality slow release fertilizer according to a soil test. Then work on your weeds that remain after it gets ... WARM! Good luck.

I'd like to plant a persimmon tree - specifically the 'Fuyu' - the kind of persimmon edible when it is still firm. The fruit is not so astringent as 'Tane-nashi'. However, I can't find the 'Fuyu' persimmon in the nurseries that I tried. Does the 'Fuyu' grow well in Texas? Would you advise where I can get it, a mail-order address? - L.S.H

I am sorry to hear of your difficulty in locating a 'Fuyu' persimmon. You mentioned that it is less mouth puckering (astringent) than the variety Tane-nashi. This is very true and as a matter of fact it is less astringent than the other southern varieties. These include Eureka, Hachiya and Tamopan. Actually Fuyu can even be eaten while still green. It is also self fruitful and makes a great pollinator for any and all oriental persimmon varieties grown in the south including Texas.

Let me suggest you check with the local independent or family owned nurseries. If they currently do not have these in stock ask the retailer if they will secure the amount you wish to plant. Womack Nursery in De Leon and Texas Pecan Nursery in Chandler are two Texas mail order fruit tree resources.

I have two Red Oak trees which, last year, developed brown splotches on their leaves. This, in turn, seemed to somewhat retard their growth, which is very slow. In the fall most of the leaves dropped prematurely.

These trees I believe are of the Shumard variety. They have healthy trunks and limbs. If you could tell me what was wrong and how to prevent it this year I would appreciate it. - H.P.

Shumard normally has very few problems of any kind. However it is more likely to get into problems during the first three years after transplanting. You could have had a fungal leaf spot on your trees called Actinopelte Leafspot. This is most severe in late summer and/or early fall.

Clean up all fallen leaves possible around these trees. Fertilize these trees well now with a premium quality slow release fertilizer according to a soil test recommendation. Continue to fertilize through the growing season approximately every eight weeks. Make your last application no later than the first of September.

Observe their leaves for the need of extra iron. How do you know what to look for? If the leaves are pale but the leaf veins remain green they could have what is called iron chlorosis. Should this happen three weeks or more after fertilizing be sure to apply a soil acidifier.

By fertilizing and watering your shumard oaks they should not have their fungal problem this year. This will also cause a great increase in their overall growth rate.

Dale Groom, CEA-Horticulture, Native Texan, Author, Radio/TV Host, Columnist is also known state wide as The Plant Groom™. Send your lawn, garden and landscape questions to dale at dalegroom@mycvc.net

Copyright 2006 by Groom Media and all rights are reserved.