

K-State Research and Extension, Harvey County, PO Box 583, Newton, KS. 67114
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Horticulture News

By: Scott Eckert, Harvey County Extension Agent, Horticulture

Current Date: 10/16/20

Release Date: as soon as possible

The leaves are really starting to fall now! Dealing with those fallen leaves is a chore for many people. Research has shown that by frequently mowing, you can sometimes incorporate up to four to six inches of fallen tree leaves into the turf without harming it. The theory behind mowing the leaves into the lawn is based upon the fact that you have to mow the lawn frequent enough. So, whenever you get a light dusting of leaves on the turf, you'll need to mow.

You'll mow not by whether the turf needs mowing, but rather you'll mow based on the amount of leaf coverage. So if you're mowing frequent enough that when you look behind you the leaves are finely chopped, and they're filtering their way back down to the soil surface, then you don't need to pick up the leaves.

Normally about four to six total inches of leaves can be mowed into the lawn. Now, that doesn't mean going out and mowing six inches of leaves all at one time. It means mowing an inch of leaves six times throughout the fall period to keep them chopped and fine so that they filter down to the soil surface.

Of course, if the leaves pile up deep enough that they start suffocating or shading the lawn, then you'll need to rake the leaves, or get out the bagger on the mower and collect the leaves and put them in your compost pile. But as long as you continue to mow frequently enough, chopping those leaves fine enough so that they filter back to the soil surface, we can save ourselves a lot of work in the lawn this fall.