

ASK THE AG TEAM, for the week of February 17, 2008

Ice damaged trees –by Tom Fowler, Horticulture Specialist, University of Missouri Extension, Buchanan County

By now most of the power has been restored to all the homes in Northwest Missouri. We are faced with cleaning up after the storm. The ice storm has injured or destroyed many trees in the area. As long as there is not an immediate physical risk from a damaged tree the thing to do is be patient. Give yourself some time to determine what should be done.

There are a few questions you should ask yourself about your trees. Was it a healthy tree to begin with or did it have problems before the storm? Are major limbs and/or the central leader broken? Is the tree a safety hazard? One rule of thumb is if the tree still has its major structure and more than 50% of the tree is intact, it has a good chance of surviving.

Cutting off large branches and/or cutting down large trees is a dangerous business, especially if you have not had a lot of experience. Larger pruning jobs will require someone with equipment and experience. Before hiring someone, there are a few things you should find out. Check and see if they have a city business license (some communities require one), are they certified or members of tree care organizations, do they have local references? They should be insured and bonded and have proof of insurance. Do not rush into hiring the first person you talk with, get a few estimates, remember be patient.

For more detailed information on what to do with your trees and selecting an arborist, the MU Extension guide titled First Aid for Storm-Damaged Trees, is available from your county's University of Missouri Extension office; most offices are listed in the local government pages of the phone book. The Buchanan County Extension office at (816) 279-1691. The guide is also on the MU Extension web site is <http://extension.missouri.edu>.

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) put together a list of some of the tree service companies in the region. This listing is available from the MDC regional office, their phone number is (816) 271-3100 or you can contact county Extension office for a copy. Other helpful guides available through your MU Extension office include: Pruning and Care of Shade Trees, Pruning Ornamental Shrubs. If you have any questions, contact your county MU Extension office or the MDC office.

Vegetable growers interested in selling at produce auctions –by Tim Baker, Horticulture Specialist, University of Missouri Extension, Daviess County

University of Missouri Extension conducts educational meetings for farmers every year, and many of them come in the winter. An upcoming meeting will be held in Jamesport on February 27th. This meeting is for vegetable growers, especially those who sell at produce auctions.

The Jamesport meeting is one in a series of four meetings. Other locations include Rich Hill, Lamar, and Barnett, Missouri.

This is a back-to-basics meeting. We will be covering topics such as soil testing, irrigation, greenhouse and high tunnel production, variety selection, plant diseases, weed control, insect pests, and produce harvest and handling.

Growers may optionally stay after the main meeting for an additional class if they wish to obtain a private applicator's license for applying pesticides to their crops.

The first 50 people to register will receive a copy of the Midwest Vegetable Production Guide for Commercial Growers. The workshop and production guide are free. For more information, call at (660) 663-3232.