

# Plants Can Have Toxic Relationship With Gardeners

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Many gardeners search for plants that are beautiful, but a gardening expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences says some plants can cause injuries or harmful effects that aren't pretty.

Most toxic plant reactions cause skin problems of some kind. Nuss says awareness and common-sense precautions can prevent most problems.

"If you develop a rash or some other symptoms from contact

with plants, collect a sample of all plants to which you were exposed," says Robert Nuss, professor of ornamental horticulture. "Samples will help your doctor identify the cause of the problem."

Nuss recommends that gardeners learn to identify problem plants. If exposed gardeners should wash thoroughly as soon as possible. "Don't use soap containing oils," Jus says. "Oils can spread toxins and promote skin absorption. Detergents or hand cleaners are the most effective."

Nuss lists some of the common plants that can have toxic or harmful effects on humans.

• **Poison plants.** Poison oak, poison ivy and poison sumac all contain the toxin urushiol in the sap of leaves, stems, fruit, flowers and roots, which can cause itchy rashes and other symptoms. The fruit of the ginkgo tree and the sap of the smoketree also can cause skin rashes.

• **Allergenic plants.** Most allergic reactions are caused by pollen, bringing on hay fever or

asthma. Mold spores can cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals, as can some lichens that grow on rocks or trees.

Nuss says orchids, tulip bulbs, chrysanthemums and dahlias can be allergenic to some individuals.

• **Skin irritant plants.** The chemicals plants have in leaves, bark, roots, bulbs or flowers can cause direct skin irritations. "In many cases the sap within the plant is the cause of the problem," Nuss explains. "Often, the irritating substance is released only when the plant tissue has been damaged or mishandled."

Nuss says some common houseplants can cause skin irritation, including poinsettias, pencil trees, daffodils, hyacinths and ornamental buttercups.

• **Stinging plants.** Most nettles can cause a toxic reaction when touched, but the reaction

does not have lasting effects and requires no medical treatment.

• **Thorny plants.** The most common plant-related injuries are caused by thorns. "Most people don't seek medical help after getting stuck by a thorn," Nuss says. "But implanted thorns, needles or spines can cause infections or other medical problems."

Nuss says thorns embedded near joints can cause chronic arthritis. Thorns embedded near bones can mimic a bone tumor. Thorny plants that can cause painful injuries include roses, black locust and honeylocust trees and blackberry bushes.

"Clothing, tools and even smoke from burning plants can carry toxins," Nuss says. "Be sure to wash all clothing and tools after working with problem plants. The residues can be hazardous for a long time."

## Companies Make Progress

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Chicken companies are making significant progress in preventing or ameliorating repetitive motion problems in processing plants. The regulatory standard proposed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is unnecessary, too expensive, and possibly harmful to the cause of correcting the conditions that contribute to repetitive motion problems, according to the National Chicken Council.

The incidence of repetitive motion problems has steadily declined in poultry processing over the last several years, according to federal statistics. The improvement indicates that worker safety programs in the industry are having an effect. Jobs have been redesigned, new equipment introduced, and employees are trained to handle their work with less stress.

In this context, it makes no sense to impose a burdensome and expensive program that will force companies to shift their focus from concern for worker well-being to compliance with federal regulations so complicated and vague that the official explanation runs to more than 300 pages of small print in the Federal Register, NCC said in a statement. The regulation will cover almost 2 million workplaces and is believed to be the most expensive regulation ever proposed by the federal

government.

The science of ergonomics is far from exact. Federal activity in this area should be based on sound science. OSHA has chosen to go ahead before a major study is completed by the National Aca-

demy of Sciences. The government should work with employers to encourage research and development of effective programs before rushing into a sweeping, extremely expensive regulation, according to NCC.

### See us at the KEYSTONE FARM SHOW Horticultural Hall - #501



#### Loop Stalls

Versatile design offers generous lunge space between loop. Heavy construction with 2 3/8" high yield steel tubing with 12 gauge wall.

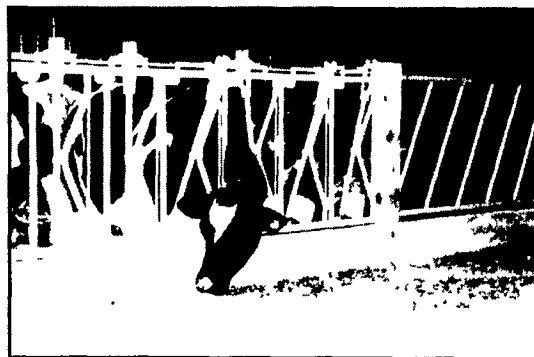
#### Gates & Fencing

Round corners for safety & strength. Constructed with 1.9 tubing with a 13 gauge wall.



#### Head Locks

Auto release for downed cows  
Adjustable neck opening for calf to cow  
Heavy 1" schedule 40 pipe for uprights



All steel equipment is powder coated with a top grade TGIC Polyester Coating and comes with a 20 Year Rust Through Guarantee.

#### Cattle Slats

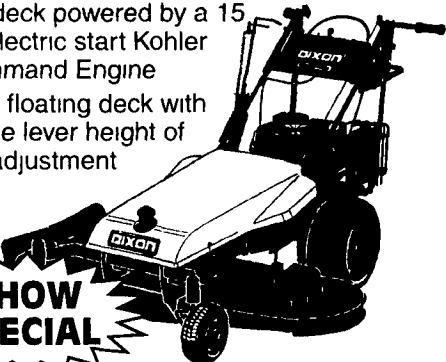
Heavy duty cattle slat is wet cast with a 1/2" diameter welded rebar cage.  
6 1/2" thick throughout the entire slat with 1 3/4" slots.  
Slow cured for extra strength.



### TRUE BLUE ZTR®

#### Dixon® ZTR® Mid-Size Walk-Behind Mower

- Z-Drive Transaxle produces hydrostatic performance at a gear drive price
- 50" deck powered by a 15 hp electric start Kohler Command Engine
- Free floating deck with single lever height of cut adjustment



SHOW SPECIAL

Reg. \$3,500 SALE PRICE **\$2199<sup>00</sup>**

Sit-down Sulky Available. Sit and Ride For Only \$600 More.

6 Months Same As Cash

Supplies Limited

Interest begins 6 months after transaction date. First payment due 7 months after transaction date. 18% APR for Shetland Financial program. No finance charge or prepayment penalty when amount financed is paid before interest begins. All Dixon Blue ZTR credit sales are subject to credit approval. Offer good on Dixon mowers and attachments through 1/31/00. See dealer for details.



The Only True ZTR® is a Blue ZTR®...

• Dixon and ZTR are registered trademarks of Dixon Industries, Inc.

See Us at

**Lawn Care Equipment Center, LLP**

Martindale, PA

(717) 445-4541

Booth 613

## LEBANON VALLEY ENTERPRISES, INC.

Manufacturing • Powder Coating • Precast

P.O. Box 187, Myerstown, PA 17067 • (717) 866-2030