**Live Oak Q’s & A’s**

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Q: My live oak is loaded with acorns this year, but it also has some round, seed-like structures that seem hollow. Do you know what they are?

A: The description makes them sound like fungal galls, growths on the foliage caused by a fungus. Other galls are very colorful and are caused by wasps that lay their eggs in a leaf cell along with chemicals that change the leaf cell into a protective growth around the egg. The galls are not thought to be a problem for the tree.

Q: Our lawn has a dead area that seems to be growing in a circle shape. My neighbor says it is brown patch and that I will need to control it with a fungicide. What do you think?

A: The symptoms match those of brown patch. A fungicide such as Fungaway or Terraclor will stop the spread of the disease, but it will probably not heal until next spring. Brown patch only kills the foliage, not the roots.

Prevent brown patch by reducing watering in the autumn. When you do water, only do it in the morning. The disease appears in low spots in the lawn. Level them off with ½-1 inch of compost.

Q: How will we know when our Satsuma are ripe?

A: If they are showing any color change from a dark green, they are probably ripe. Quite often the color change to fall orange does not occur until late in the process. If you have lots of fruit, try one now. Quality will stay high into late November.

Q: What insecticide should I use on my tomatoes to kill stink bugs?

A: Sevin or Malathion will control the pests.

Q: Which works best to protect tomatoes from freezes, blankets or plastics?

A: Blankets are better if you are going to drape the covering over the plant. Plastic works well if you make a tent over a frame. Be careful, though, it heats up when the sun comes out. There is a new product called a “planket” that is a plasticized fabric that works very well.