

## Gardening With Chuck for December 30, 2013 - January 5, 2014

Beware the seed catalog!

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Before I start my real message, real Christmas trees, totally free of decorations, can be dropped off at the vacant lot at 14<sup>th</sup> and Jackson. It used to be that we had to get into January before the new seed catalogs would start to arrive. As I was cleaning house ahead of Christmas eve I came across two catalogs that had arrive sometime since Thanksgiving. Now days I don't receive quite as many seed catalogs, I probably receive as many emails, but none the less, those catalogs or emails, are dangerous things. They are especially dangerous right now as we're sitting here with snow on the ground and we've had enough freezing weather that we're ready for spring and that's a long way off yet. These companies have been sending out these catalogs for a long time and they know that gardeners are at their weakest in January and February so they want to get those glossy photos in front of you when you are the most susceptible to impulse buying. So go ahead and look at those catalogs and web sites all you want. You can even start making a list of varieties, plants and cultivars that catch your fancy. But under no circumstances should you be ordering anything yet. Make that list and let it get cold. Then look at it again. Get out your 2014 garden map and start plotting out where you are going to plant all of your items and see if you have the room. If you find that your new list is going to require not only all of your yard as well as your neighbors yards, you'd better start scaling it back. But if it realistically fits and you have your families blessing, THEN you can start to order!

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Have fun at garden shows!

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## Gardener's New Year's resolutions

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Gardeners are eternal optimists. Anyone who tries to grow plants of any kind in Kansas has to be an optimist! As such, we gardeners, and I include myself in this, have need for special new year's resolutions. Let's start by acknowledging that we sometimes grow more produce than we can use. You know what I'm talking about. It's when the neighbors lock the doors and close the blinds pretending to be gone when we walk down the street with bags of zucchini to give away. So this year, resolve to keep your vegetable production in check and if you do over produce, don't annoy your neighbors, just take it to the food pantry instead. Resolve to be less obsessive compulsive about your lawn. It's okay if your lawn is NOT the first one to green up. And if you find one dandelion, just deal with it and don't retreat the entire lawn. Mow high, don't bag your clippings, and don't water everyday. We waste way too much water in the landscapes in an effort to create a lawn that isn't really meant to exist in our climate. Just back off a little bit and don't strive quite so hard for that perfect lawn. Resolve to learn more about the insects of our area and which ones really need to be controlled. We spray way more pesticides than we need to for plant health. Sure, bagworms need to be controlled or we lose our junipers, but if we exercise a little patience, natural controls will usually take care of things like aphids and sometimes even spider mites. So take the time to give me a call or drop me an email and ask questions about your plants and their pests and options!

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