

### Grass Seeding Deadline/Dormant Seeding

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Our fall planting season for fescue and bluegrass lawns runs from September 1<sup>st</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup>. Seed planted within this time frame, assuming adequate rainfall or irrigation occurs, will sprout and become well enough established so that it will survive the winter. We don't generally lose young grass seedlings to freezing, we lose them to desiccation. Grass seed planted after October 15<sup>th</sup> but before November 15<sup>th</sup> will usually sprout and try to start growing, but doesn't become well enough rooted before cold weather shuts it down. Subsequent freezing and thawing will pop the little grass plants slowly out of the ground and the roots will dry out and the plant dies. Next comes the process of dormant seeding. In dormant seeding you are planting the grass seed into ground that is basically too cold for germination to occur, or occur very rapidly. The idea being that the seed will lay dormant or nearly dormant and not sprout new growth until it warms up in March, although I have seen a dormant seeding emerge under long periods of snow cover. Generally I prefer to just wait until the last week of March or the first couple weeks of April to seed as opposed to a dormant seeding. Sometimes a dormant seeding will just fail because of seedling diseases or other natural processes. Good grass seed is expensive enough that I don't want to roll the dice on a dormant seeding. So, you've got about another three weeks to get grass seeded or just pack it in until late March and do it then. Or, if you like to gamble, get out there over Thanksgiving break and seed then! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Adding Organic Matter to Garden Soils

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. A great garden next year starts this fall. We have tough soils around here. The biggest challenge in most cases are their high clay content. This is not something that you can change overnight, or even in one or two growing seasons. Improving soil tilth comes down to a long term continual process of adding organic matter and tilling it in. And the best time to do this is in the fall. Organic matter can come from many sources. I'm not fond of using left over garden plants. Too much potential for disease issues there. I'd rather remove that stuff and come in with something else. Dried grass clipping can work as long as it wasn't the first mowing after a herbicide application. Tree leaves are an awesome source especially if you gather them with the bagger of your lawn mower which is about the ONLY time I feel a bagger should be used. By gathering the leaves with your lawn mower it shreds them up so they will break down faster. You can use livestock manure but you will want to have seasoned or composted manure. Fresh manure can be hard to work with and can sometimes get you into trouble, although less so with a fall application. You can also use old rotted silage from an ensilage pile. You can use almost anything that is plant based. It will all break down and add organic matter to your soil. Avoid using sawdust of any kind and walnut leaves or wood chips though as walnuts can be toxic to many garden plants. You want to spread the organic matter evenly over the garden and then till it in as deeply as possible supplemented with a little nitrogen fertilizer. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Planting Garlic

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The past several years I've had a lot of fun growing garlic. There are many, many different varieties of garlic. When you go to the store what do you buy? Garlic - variety not named. In speciality shops you can sometimes buy named varieties. Most garden stores, if they have garlic at all, just have, garlic. The company out of Washington state that I order from has over 100 varieties of garlic in many different types. There's hardnecks and softnecks. There's artichoke types (the most common) turbans, asiatics, rocambole, marbled purple strip and purple stripe, there's creole, porcelain and silverskins. Some are mild some are strong, some can be braided, others can't. But one thing that most all garlic has in common when it comes to growing it in Kansas, is you have to plant it in the fall. Just like wheat, it needs to be in the ground and go through a cooling process before it will develop daughter bulbs. It will grow if you plant it in the spring, but it won't create the daughter bulbs that are the cloves we used when we cook. I like to plant my garlic in mid October. That gives it about the 6 weeks of recommended growth before really cold weather sets in. Garlic likes rich well drained soils. Heat is garlic's enemy so mulching it after it starts growing in the spring is a good idea. For this fall, when you get your garlic sets or cloves, plant them about 2 inches deep, 4 to 6 inches apart in the row and rows 18 to 24 inches apart. If the soil is a little dry water it down good once and that should be good for this fall. Spread a little fertilizer over the top before you water. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.