

Gardener Gambling

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I think that whether they want to admit to it or not, gardeners are inherently gamblers. They try to push the gardening season earlier on the front end and later on the back end. They look for every trick in the book to get tomatoes earlier than anyone else, or to try a new variety or even uncommon species that may only be partially adapted to our climate. Gardeners may not spend time at casinos, but many of them are gamblers none the less. So here, let me be an enabler to your gambling ways! In general we don't recommend planting much of anything until the middle of March. We've got things like lettuce, potatoes, radishes, peas, and turnips that lead the list of early plants to start. Of those, peas are probably the earliest. The thing to keep in mind here is that this is all in fun. We aren't putting all of our pea eggs in one basket so to speak. If this is a total bust, you just till it up and plant it back to something else later. But it's been kind of warm so why not pick the sunniest edge of your garden and plant one row of peas, maybe even a row of potatoes. We plant peas and potatoes deep anyway, usually two inches and four inches, so go ahead and get a row planted. Maybe throw a little starter fertilizer down and hoe it in first or, if you have straight phosphorus fertilizer, you can even put some in the furrow with the seed. Then just stand back and see what happens. Germination will probably be quite slow so don't expect a whole lot right away. But here's what we're really doing - we're just have some fun. Getting a little jump on the season, just for fun! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.

What Fruit Trees to Plant

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. In spite of all my dire warning about the perils of growing fruit, people still plant fruit trees every year. Okay, I may not plant fruit trees EVERY year, but let's just say that I have several and we'll leave it at that! So, if you are going to plant fruit trees, plant varieties that are going to minimize your frustration and maximize your chance of actually getting fruit. Perhaps our most reliable is tart or pie cherries. Forget the Bings, go for pie cherries. There are three very good cultivars, Montmorency, Meteor and North Star. Meteor and North Star are both genetic dwarfs and all three are good producers! Next we go to apples. Many apple varieties have severe leaf disease issues so plant cultivars that have resistance such as Red Delicious, William's Pride, Enterprise, Priscilla and Redfree. Be sure to plant at least two different varieties to allow for cross pollination. You may still have to spray for insects however. Pears, like apples, can be tough long lasting fruit trees. Bartletts are well known but not the best variety for Kansas. For fresh eating plant Moonglow or Duchess. For cooking consider Seckel. Peaches. Yeah, a fresh peach is great, but they can be challenging in Kansas. Peach blossoms often come out early and get frosted. So we want trees that have the best cold weather tolerance. Top marks would go to Intrepid and other cultivars to consider would be Early Redhaven, Redhaven, Harken and Reliance. Peach trees tend to be short lived, as in 10 to 12 years, so you may want to plant a peach tree every 3 or 4 years so you always have a chance! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Gearing up for spring lawn care

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. It's March. We've had glimpses of spring and it is on the way. While the grass isn't really growing much yet, it is time to get things squared away and ready to go. As I've said earlier here, get all those little branches cleaned up now. If you are going to be doing any grass reseeding or overseeding, do not apply any herbicides or weed preventers this spring. It's too easy to mess up germination of grass seedlings. If you fertilized last fall and applied broadleaf weed control products, as in dandelion killers, then you don't need to fertilize now. But walk around your yard and if you see lots of small weeds, then you probably had weeds come up after your treated. Then apply a broadleaf weed killer now. Liquid is probably the best choice but either will work. Herbicides work best when the temperature is above 50 degrees and stays there for several hours after application. If you are going to do some seeding, do it between March 21st and April 21st. Now the big question that everyone wants to know - is it time to apply crabgrass preventer? Probably not. The ground is way too cool for crabgrass seed to germinate yet. It needs much warmer soil. It won't germinate until end of April or early May. But you want it applied a week or two before germination starts. If you use one of the newer products, like Barricade or Dimension, then apply those in late March. They have season long residual control. If you use any of the other products, wait until about April 15th and then retreat about 8 weeks later so you can get season long control. If you don't get rain soon, irrigate. This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK,

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