

Why do you garden?

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Home vegetable gardening is growing rapidly in popularity. There are many different reasons why people grow vegetable gardens. For some of us, like me, it's fun and there is nothing like fresh produce from your own garden. Is it healthier than what you buy in the store? No, not really. But the taste is frequently much better as you can pick produce at the peak time for flavor. It may not be healthier, but it's sure going to taste better. Secondly, some folks want to grow their own produce because they then know how it's been grown. There is a sense that if I grow it, it is going to be safer. By safer many folks think that if they raise it organically, or with a minimum amount of chemical pesticides it is better for them. That doesn't mean that homegrown produce is without risks. Bacterial contamination can still occur in your home garden. You still need to use all the standard food safety recommendations with your own produce as you would with store purchased produce. Another reason is to have a project that the whole family can be involved in. Teaching children how to work in the soil can be fun and instill life long skills that they may pass on to their own children. Finally, some folks garden to save money. There have been numerous studies that show a home garden, on average, to have a value of somewhere between 62 and 74 cents per square foot. That can add up in a hurry. The highest value produce for home gardens? Well, that list included the likes of tomatoes, salad greens, beets, broccoli and potatoes. So there's lots of good reasons to garden!

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## Wildlife resistant landscape plants

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. One problem that I receive a lot of questions about is wildlife damage, particularly deer damage, on landscape plants. Now, there's two types of deer damage. There's feeding damage and there's antler damage. Feeding damage is when the deer eat part of your plant. Deer love roses, they also love a lot of our vegetable garden plants. They like fruit trees, well, they like a lot of things, especially in the spring when there is a lot of succulent young growth. The other problem from deer comes in the fall. Deer create rubs on plants to indicate to other deer that a superior buck has claimed an area. They scrape their antlers along the side of a tree making a very visible visual marking to other bucks. They can take the bark and lots of small branches right off a tree causing serious damage. Feeding damage we can control somewhat through plant selection and application of taste deterrents. Rubs in the fall are another story for another day. There exists lists of plants that are less desirable to deer. Four tree species are listed and three of those are poor choices. They are Blue Spruce, poorly adapted to our climates, Russian Olive, a short lived small tree, Tree of Heaven - a rapid growth rate tree that I consider a weed, and then Smoketree. A nice small tree. For shrubs the list includes barberry, boxwood, redosier dogwood, mahonia, yew, rose of sharon, european privet and Vanhoutte spirea. All of these are good shrub species in the proper location. For annual and perennials the list is quite lengthy. If you'd like a copy of the entire list, give me a call at the office! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

### All America Selection Plants for 2013

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Many gardeners anxiously await the annual announcement of the All-America Selection winners each year. The list for 2013 is now out. Keep in mind that it may be another year or two before these plants or seeds are readily available in the trade. To view photos of these plants, just enter all america selection plants in your internet search engine and you'll get to their website, with photos, in a hurry. This year we have 3 flowers, 2 melons and a tomato. The flowers are a canna called South Pacific Scarlet, an Echinacea called Cheyenne Spirit and a geranium known as Pinto Premium white to rose. Echinacea is also known as cone flower and while we are used to it being a lavender color, this selection has a wide range of colors from rich purple to pink, red, orange, light yellows and white. A sturdy plant with some good new colors. The geranium is fascinating as the petals start out white and then change to a rose pink as they flowers mature. The tomato is a cherry tomato known as Jasper. It has a long harvest window, high yielding vigorous plant with very good fruit texture and sweetness. The two melons were Melemon and Harvest Moon. Melemon is a honedew type melon with an interesting tanginess. Harvest Moon is a triploid seedless watermelon that is very similar to the well known heirloom variety Moon and Stars. Deep green rind with yellow dots it is earlier to ripen, higher yielding and better tasting the Moon and Stars. It has healthy shorter vines and medium sized fruit. So there you have it, the new plant stars for 2013! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.