

Gardening with Chuck Programs for December 21 - 27, 2020

Travel Prepared

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Winter officially started a little before 4 a.m. this morning. Even though we've all been advised not to travel this holiday season many of you will be. Even if you don't, you'll still be traveling back and forth to work on a fairly regular basis. Winter conditions can change on very short notice and unpredictably sometimes. Even just driving a few miles to work and back home can wind up being treacherous. Always be prepared. Keep your car at least half full of gas in the winter months. Keep extra blankets, gloves, coats, caps in your car. You never know when you might wind up stranded in a ditch or a snowdrift and having a cellphone doesn't do you any good if rescue vehicles can't get to you for 12 hours for the storm. Failing to be prepared is preparing to fail and we don't want that! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Keep the Plants Watered

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Many homes have a real Christmas tree. Many homes have a poinsettia. These are both living plants that need water and need it regularly. The problem is that as we get ever closer to Christmas we get busier and busier and we sometimes forget to water until we notice the poinsettia drooping or suddenly realize that there are needles falling off the tree like a blizzard! Just make it a morning and evening routine to add water to the Christmas tree. If you run it totally out of water it's going to seal over and not take up any more. If the poinsettia wilts just once, you can water it, the leaves will come back up, and then all fall off. That's just the way that they are. And then you'll have these nice green stems with the red bracts and flowers at the top and zero leaves. Remember to check the soil daily on poinsettias. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Watch the Temperature

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Tropical house plants get their name because they are native to the tropics. Unless you are on a mountain in the tropics the temperature rarely falls below about 65 degrees. How cool do you keep your house in the winter? Do you turn the thermostat down at night? Keep in mind that many of these plants can get temperature shocked and start to drop leaves. You may put a plant by a window for extra light, but have you ever checked the temperature by that window on a cold winter's night? It may get a little too cool. Once plants get towards the bottom of their preferred temperature range they'll use water far more slowly, which means that you also have to reduce watering. Make sure you water when the soil is dry, not when you hit a certain day of the week. Remember, pay attention to the plants micro-climate! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Enjoy Your Holidays!

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The next week to ten days will be a time of many gatherings. If I know you well, I may wish you a Merry Christmas or last week I may have wished you a Happy Hanukkah if I know that your are Jewish. If I know that you celebrate Kwanza I may try to offer the traditional Swahili greeting and probably massacre the phrase, but I'll try. If I don't know, I may wish you a happy holiday season out of respect to whatever holiday or holidays your celebrate and observe. It is not meant as an offense to any one celebration but is done out of respect to all celebrations during the month of December. You may respond however you are comfortable and trust me, I won't be offended. So as we head into this time of celebration I wish each and everyone of you a good celebration. Be safe, be well and be sure to mask up! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Christmas Day, No Program

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