

Gardening with Chuck Programs for December 28, 2020 - January 3, 2021

What to do With the Christmas Tree

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Christmas is over and those of us with real Christmas trees will be undecorating them soon and getting them out of the house. Far too many of these will be set out with the trash on the next pickup day. But these recently used trees have many other valuable uses. At my house the tree goes out near the bird feeders where it provides shelter for the birds visiting my many bird feeders. Some people tie them up to a tree in the yard and hang pine cones smeared with peanut butter and bird seed or similar treats for the wildlife. Branches can be cut off and used to mulch tender perennials. If you have a chipper shredder you can run it through that and have the best smelling mulch you'll ever see. And occasionally local fish and game clubs will collect them to use as wildlife habitat. So please, give your tree a second life! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Get the Greenery Out!

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Often even before the Christmas tree is out the door, natural greenery should be out the door too. Natural greenery used as table or mantle decorations, garlands or wreaths are very dry by now and they dryer they get the greater the fire hazard. I know there is a temptation to keep these decorations around for a few more days or weeks, but really, the sooner that you get them out the door, the better. We gave my parents a natural greenery wreath one year for the door of their apartment. My mom loved it but when we went to see her on Valentine's Day, she still had it out. Every time the door shut, more needles fell off. It was a struggle but we finally got her to accept that it was time to take it down. The greenery was fun to have around, but it's now time to get it out of the house for safety reasons! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Start Getting Your Seed Orders Ready

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Okay, against all my better judgement I'm going to encourage you, again, to get your seed and plant orders off early. I ordered my onion and leek plants a month ago. Last year, because of the pandemic, we had a lot more gardeners than normal. A lot more gardeners by a long shot. The seeds that we buy this spring to plant were produced last summer. Companies don't know what the demand will be in a year when they are making their seed production plans. Nobody knew that the pandemic was going to come along like it did. I don't know if the companies were able to scale up their seed production or if they did. But to be on the safe side, get your garden plan laid out, figure out what you have room for, and then get those seeds ordered or as soon as they are in stores, get them bought!! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Don't Be In Too Big of a Hurry to Start Plants

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. 2020 is almost over and a new year is thankfully getting ready to start. As we start getting going in January many a gardener gets the itch and often starts growing vegetable plants in the house to be set out. The problem is there is too much spring fever and too little planning in a lot of these actions. We are still a couple months away from starting many plants from seed including the ever popular tomatoes and peppers. There are a few early frost hardy flowers you can start in January but little else, EXCEPT onions. Onions are normally set out in mid to late March. You can buy onion seed and get them started in mid to late January as it takes 6 to 8 weeks from seeding to transplanting. Onions demand a little extra patience and care, unlike many of the other garden plants. If you want to try it, call me for directions! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

New Year's Day, No Program

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