

Gardening with Chuck Programs for December 27 - January 2, 2022

And the Wind Blew

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. In June of 1982 we had a thunderstorm roll through that nailed Junction City with 90 mph downburst winds. It was pretty much a mess around here for several days. December 15th we had a deracho blow through with measured winds in excess of 90 mph. Twice in a lifetime and a county agent career is enough of these for anyone. In many ways, the December 15th storm was worse because of how long we had such incredible winds. If this would have been four months earlier the wind damage to trees would have been exponentially worse. For right now you don't have to be in a hurry to clean up any storm damage to trees. If someone knocks on your door offering to trim your trees, say "NO!" and close the door. I'll be talking more about this and the trees in coming days and weeks, but for now, be patient. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Don't Waste A Good 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 un-decorating 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.

Start Making a Planting Plan

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It never used to happen until after January 1st. This year it occurred on December 18th. That's when the first garden seed catalog hit my mailbox. These people are cruel! It's not even the official start of winter and they want me to buy seeds now. You know what - I will!!! BUT, not until I finalize my planting plan. What I will do, and what I recommend you do, is to make a map of your garden, and then figure out, with proper spacing, what you can plant. I already have my garlic and shallots in the ground. My onions and leeks are ordered for early spring delivery. So now I sit down with my map and figure out how much space I want to allocate to potatoes, or tomatoes, peppers, beans, etc. I'll use relay cropping and put my vine crops in after my garlic is out. Make a plan, then open up your garden catalog. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Evaluate Shade Trees Now

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I would normally encourage homeowners to take time during the winter to critically evaluate their yard shade trees for issues such as broken or dead limbs, signs of hollow areas where squirrels may be darting in and out, and really just anything that doesn't look right. When the leaves are off the tree you have a better chance of seeing issues or potential issues. With the windstorm earlier this month it becomes even more crucial to start taking a look. If you find things that don't look right, give me a call to come out and look at it or contact a certified arborist to evaluate it. Don't hire someone who is going door to door. If a tree trimmer suggests topping the tree, suggest they leave your property. Some damage may not be apparent for weeks, but we've got plenty of time and don't need to be in a rush! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Have A Happy New Year

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We are literally at the end of the year. A new year is just hours away. No one knows what 2022 will bring but invariably, there will be some changes on the horizon. Big changes for some folks, minor changes for other folks. But in many ways January 1st is just another day. The sun rises and we go about our lives. We remember to write a different number on the year and away we go. In spite of the pandemic and all the other changes happening in society, one thing won't change. K-State Research and Extension, with offices in all 105 Kansas counties, is still here to answer your questions and help you find solutions to problems in your home, yard, garden, field, pasture or just wherever. We enjoy helping you and here in Geary County, we've been doing it since 1925. Happy New Year everyone! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.