

Scallions

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Scallions are literally the same exact thing as green onions. They are onions that are pulled early, normally to be eaten fresh. Spring onions are similar only they are allowed to start to develop a small bulb before pulling. With scallions we are generally using them fresh. We won't keep them in the fridge for more than a few days. We use them for that fresh bright bite of onion. We aren't worried about forming a huge bulb or storage life after drying. They won't get that big.

Therefore, if you want some scallions, or green onions, in your garden, just go to the garden center or hardware store and buy some of the dry little un-named onion bulbs. You can use either white, yellow or even red, though most folks do prefer white bulbs. Give them a good shot of fertilizer and get ready to harvest! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Starter Fertilizer in Early Gardens

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Snow or rain allowing, in two months we could be putting in some early garden. We have to keep in mind that the soils will be cold and growth will be really slow at first. One other thing that we know for certain is that in cold soils, phosphorus and potassium, which are so crucial for early root and crown development, are much harder for plants to extract from the soil. If you are setting out transplants like cabbage or other cole crops early in the season it would be prudent to use a liquid root stimulator or plant starter solution. If you are planting potatoes, onions or other cool season crops directly in the ground then a broadcast application of a general purpose fertilizer that has nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium something like 12-12-12 or 8-10-8 would be a good early season starter fertilizer. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Radon Awareness

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. January is Kansas Radon Action Month. Radon is an invisible odorless radioactive gas that is naturally occurring and can cause lung cancer. Some parts of the country have low levels of it and others have high levels of it. It comes out of the ground and can be found in homes, especially basements. Unlike carbon monoxide that can kill in minutes, the threat from radon is long term exposure, as in decades worth of 8 hours a day exposure. The only way to know if you have it is to test your home. The test is simple and not expensive. The test kits cost under \$10 and you can buy them at the Extension Office. That cost includes analysis. The report comes back to you. If you spend considerable time in your basement or an earth bermed home, you really need to test. Stop by and pick up a test today! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

Pay Attention to Germination Temperatures

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I planted my pansies last week to hopefully have some nice bright colors to plant in some early spring pots the first of April. Pansies can take quite a while to germinate and get to size, 12 weeks or more. I really should have started them before the end of the year. They need dark and they have a preferred germination temperature of 65 degrees. My basement is perfect for that. But a lot of other things I'll be starting in a month or two need warmer temperatures than that 65 my basement is. Tomatoes and peppers prefer a germination temperature of 80. They will germinate at 70 but they'll take longer. I may put a heating mat under those flats when it's time, or I may start them a week or so earlier. If you are starting transplants from seed, be sure to pay attention to those germination temperatures. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.

What Size Fruit Tree to Plant

This is Gardening with Chuck. I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Starting this spring and over the next couple of springs, I'm planting more fruit trees at the farm. I grew up on a farm with a big orchard and while I have two apples and a pear, I want to add to that. I know the cultivars I want so now I just have to find the source. Most homeowners are probably going to plant dwarf fruit trees and I may have to resort to that as I may not be able to find what I want any other way. While dwarf fruit trees, if properly planted, stay small, sadly their root systems stay small too. Therefore, dwarf trees are prone to wind upheaval damage. And the wind does blow in Kansas. In many cases, if you have the room, semi-dwarf fruit trees are going to be better suited to our windy conditions and will also be more productive. They'll likely take a taller ladder and more pruning however. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Gardening with Chuck.