

Horticulture 2025 Newsletter

No. 03 March 4, 2025

1712 Claflin, 2021 Throckmorton Plant Science Center
Manhattan, KS 66506 (785) 532-6173

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

K-State Garden Hour

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Register to attend this free webinar here:

<https://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/consumer-horticulture/garden-hour/>



Establishing a Native Prairie Stand at Home

Wednesday, March 5th 12:00PM -1:00PM CST

Transform your land into a thriving prairie habitat! Join Amy Keigher, Johnson County Natural Resources Extension Agent, as she guides you through the process of establishing a home prairie stand. Learn about the benefits of prairie landscapes, plant selection, and maintenance techniques to create a beautiful, sustainable ecosystem right at home.



Register Here!

Please register for this free Zoom Webinar at:
ksre-learn.com/KStateGardenHour



Garden Spotlight

Send in your garden stories! Last year our Hort Newsletter featured six different gardeners/garden programs.

We love learning about our fellow Kansas gardeners and want to feature your home/community/school garden in our newsletter so we can all grow together.

Email hortsupport@ksu.edu to find out more.

“A Gathering for Gardeners”

March 8 (8:30-2:15)

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

407 E. 12th St. Hutchinson, KS

Join the Hutchinson Horticulture Club for a day of educational presentations on flowers, vegetables and more. Admission is free. To learn more, visit the Hutchinson Horticulture Club Facebook page.

Harvey County Home and Garden Show “Birds and Blooms”

March 22 (8:00AM-5:00 PM) – March 23 (Noon-5:00 PM)

Hosted at the 13-acre Dyck Arboretum, the 2025 Harvey County Home and Garden Show has great food, vendors and an amazing speaker line-up addressing this year’s theme “Birds and Blooms”. For just \$1 admission you can spend the weekend enjoying the scenery while getting a great education as you prepare for the growing season.

[“Birds and Blooms” Speaker Schedule 2025](#)



Johnson County Healthy Yards Expo

March 29, 2025 (9:00AM – 2:00PM)

A free family and earth-friendly event. Explore and discover sustainable options for your home and garden through expert advice and educational seminars. Plus, a native plant sale and door prizes. Visit: johnson.k-state.edu or call (913)715-7050 for more information

VIDEO OF THE WEEK:

[Maximizing Water Efficiency Through Drip Irrigation](#)

(K-State Garden Hour February, 2025)



Explore water conservation practices and learn about the benefits of drip irrigation.

GARDEN CALENDAR

Planting

Crop	Type of Planting	Timing
asparagus	crowns	mid-March to mid-April
kale	seed/transplant	mid-March
fennel	seed	mid-March to early-April
kohlrabi	seed	mid-March to early-April
lettuce	seed	mid-March to early-April
leeks	transplant	mid-March
onion	sets/plants	mid-to late-March
parsnips	seed	mid-March to early-April
peas	seed	mid-March
potatoes	seed	mid-March to early-April
radish	seed	mid- to late-March
rhubarb	crowns	March to April
rutabaga	seed	mid- to late-March
spinach	seed	mid- to late-March
turnip	seed	mid- to late-March

Pruning

- [Ornamental Grasses](#)
- [Blackberries and Raspberries](#)
- [Deciduous trees](#)
- [Summer-Flowering/Non-Flowering Shrubs](#)

Scouting

- [Iris Leaf Spot](#)
- Apply fungicide for [Peach Leaf Curl](#) prior to bud swell

Turfgrass

Cool season grasses:

- [Control broadleaf weeds](#)
- [Aerate lawn now through April](#)

Warm season grasses

[Control broadleaf weeds](#)

VEGETABLES

Rhubarb

Rhubarb is a perennial vegetable native to Asia. The leaf stalks are used for jellies, sauces and pies.

One of the biggest concerns with growing rhubarb is crown rot. Begin with healthy, disease-free plants, and plant in well-drained or mounded soil.

Use mulch around plants to minimize weeds, but monitor for signs of slugs and snails.



Plant rhubarb crowns from mid-March through early April. Wait to divide existing plants until they are at least three years old and make sure each division has a large “eye” or bud. Plants will decrease productivity if not divided after growing for five to ten years. Dig a shallow trench and bury each plant so the bud is ½ to 1-inch below the soil surface. Space plants two to three feet apart. Gently pack the soil over the plants.

During the first year of growth rhubarb should not be harvested. A few stalks can be harvested during the second year. This will allow plants to become well-established and highly productive. The harvest window lasts about eight weeks.

If seed stalks develop, break them off right away to direct energy to the crown and roots.

Rhubarb leaves contain oxalic acid which can cause sores on the mouth if eaten. The stalks are the only edible part of the plant. [K-State Research and Extension Rhubarb](#)

Potatoes



Mid-March to April is planting time for spring potatoes. Begin with disease-free tubers from a reputable source. Potatoes from the grocery store may not produce a large yield compared with certified seed potatoes.

Early maturing varieties, especially in southern Kansas, are best so tuber development is complete prior to the summer heat. Cut the tubers into 1 ½ to 2-ounce pieces, “seeds”, and store in a warm, humid location for two to three days. This time allows the cut to heal and prevents rot.

Plant the seeds in fertile, well-drained soil when it reaches at least 45 degrees F. Seeds should be planted two inches deep and spaced 12 inches apart in rows 3 feet apart. Potatoes require regular watering.

Practice crop rotation by avoiding planting in an area where tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, potatoes or tomatillos have been planted in the past three to four years.

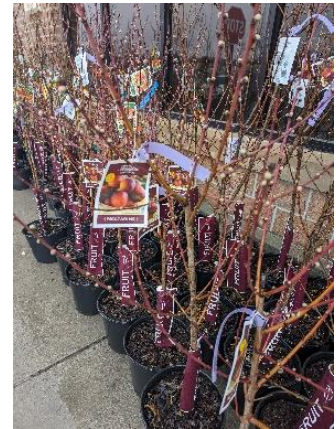
As potatoes develop along the main stem protruding from the seed, pull loose soil up, or apply straw mulch, over the potatoes. This will prevent them from being sunburned. They will be ready for harvest when the vines are about half dead. (Kansas Garden Guide)

FRUIT

Planting Fruit Trees

It's time for establishing new fruit trees in Kansas. Here are a few tips to get started.

- Whether bare root or potted trees, store them in a shady location and keep watered until planting. Bare root trees may be potted temporarily to prevent against drying out if they won't be planted right away. Do not store bare root trees in water.
- Remove wires, labels and anything else attached to the tree to prevent damage to the trunk and branches.
- Roots may need pruning prior to planting to avoid girdling.
- Dig a hole approximately three times the width of the root ball.
- Backfill the soil to completely cover the root ball, but avoid covering the graft.



You can access our complete publication for planning your fruit garden through the KSRE bookstore: [Planning your Fruit Garden](#).

Pruning Raspberries and Blackberries

March is time for pruning raspberries and blackberries. Though the plants are perennial and can survive several years, the canes are biennial and only live for two years. The first year for each cane is a growth year. The second year is for fruiting. After the second year, the canes should be pruned out. Everbearing red raspberries and blackberries are the exception as they produce fruit on first year canes.

See our publication on [Raspberries and Blackberries](#) for details about proper pruning.

FLOWERS

Iris Leaf Spot



Iris leaf spot is a fungus that overwinters in the dead leaf material on the ground. As water or wind disrupts infected leaves, the fungal spores are transferred to the healthy new growth.

As new growth appears, clean up any dead leaves to prevent spreading this disease.

TURF

Buffalograss Lawn

Buffalograss is a warm-season grass native to Kansas and much of the Midwest, with excellent heat, drought and cold tolerance.

Buffalograss grows best with morning sun and 6-8 hours of sunlight throughout each day. It does not do well in poorly drained or sandy soils. For non-irrigated sites, plant in the spring once soil temperatures reach 55 degrees F at a rate of 1.5 to 2 pounds of buffalograss burrs (1 to 5 seeds in a burr) per 1,000 square feet.

Buffalograss is dioecious, which means there are male and female plants. In seeded areas, you can see the inflorescences (male flowers) on male plants emerge several inches tall. The female plant produces a flower close to the soil that is not as noticeable. Several seeds are produced within each female burr. Vegetative buffalograss cultivars can be purchased which are typically sold as plugs. They are generally the female plants (no visible seedheads during the growing season).



You can learn more about cultivars, establishment and management here: [Buffalograss Lawns](#) (K-State Turf and Landscape Blog)

MISCELLANEOUS

Kansas-Grown Fruits and Vegetables Buying Guide

Purchasing fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables supports a healthy diet and the community. Kansas Department of Agriculture has a directory to help consumers find local farmers markets ([Farmers Market Directory](#)) but you can also reach out to your local Extension office for sources of local produce.

K-State Research and Extension has published an informative guide with a calendar indicating when various types of produce are in season. Purchasing in-season produce is more cost-efficient but also has much better flavor. You can access the KSRE Buying Guide linked below.

[Kansas-Grown Fruits and Vegetables Buying Guide](#)

Seed Tape

Seed tapes are a method of preparing seeds for planting. It is a great option for gardeners of all ages because it reduces the amount of time spent bending over the ground. It also makes it easier to handle small seeds and get proper seed spacing.



To make a seed tape cut a paper towel into strips 2 inches wide by 12 inches long. Create a paste by mixing a small amount of flour with water. Use a ruler and pencil to mark dots at the proper spacing for the type of seed being planted. (See the seed packet for recommended plant spacing.) Put one seed on each dot on the paper towel. Put a small drop of the flour paste on top of each seed. Allow the paste to dry before moving the seed tape.

At the appropriate time, each seed tape can be planted at the proper depth in the garden. The seeds will germinate through the paste. Over time, the paper towel will dissolve into the garden. Toilet tissue and tissue paper are other options for making seed tape.

This activity is perfect for getting children involved. Sit together at a table and create an assembly line for an efficient way to get the garden growing.

<https://kansashealthyyards.org/component/allvideoshare/video/making-your-own-seed-tape>

QUESTION of the MONTH

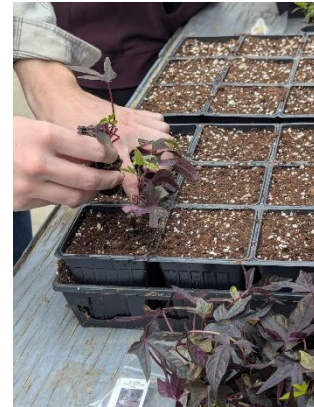


“Why do some people start plants by seed versus transplants?”

Some plants perform better when planted by seed while others do best when transplanted. For many plants, starting either way is fine.

Root vegetables, such as carrots, turnips and beets tend to not transplant well. Cole crops such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and Brussels sprouts should be transplanted so they will mature before the heat arrives and slows down production.

Starting plants from seed can be less expensive, but transplants have established roots giving them a head start on the season without having to nurture tender seedlings.



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Kansas Garden Guide

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For questions or further information, contact your local extension agency.
This newsletter is also available on the World Wide Web at:
<http://hnr.k-state.edu/extension/info-center/newsletters/index.html>

The web version includes color images that illustrate subjects discussed. To subscribe to this newsletter electronically, send an e-mail message to hortsupport@ksu.edu listing your e-mail address in the message.

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