

Female Narrator: Welcome to the Lawn and Garden podcast with University of Wyoming extension specialists Jeff Edwards, and co-host Jerry Erschabeck. Originally aired on KGOS and KERM in Torrington, join Jeff, Jerry, and their special guests as they talk all things gardening in Wyoming. Our Lawn and Garden podcasts helps you improve your home garden or small acreage.

Jeff Edwards: Good morning, everybody. This is Jeff Edwards. This is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program. With me today, my co-host, is Jerry Erschabeck. Good morning, Jerry. How are you?

Jerry Erschabeck: Good morning, Jeff. Starting off this morning with a smile.

Jeff Edwards: Excellent. Good to see you. The sun's shining, we should be smiling, right?

Jerry Erschabeck: Absolutely.

Jeff Edwards: Also joining us today is Roberta Luke. Roberta is a Master Gardener in Goshen county and local producer. We're happy to have you here. Good morning, Roberta.

Roberta Luke: Good morning.

Jeff Edwards: Let's take a moment and listen to our sponsors and we'll be back in a bit.

Female Narrator: [MUSIC] University of Wyoming Extension events will not be held in person through May 15th, 2020. Our educators are hard at work planning virtual education and activities. We will continue with much of our programming digitally on our website and official Facebook pages. See what we're up to this week at wyoextension.org or visit your county Facebook page.

Female Narrator: [MUSIC] Do you have questions about the coronavirus or COVID-19? Go to uwyo.cnp.org/coronavirus/uwextension to find reliable information, community resources, and recipes using the food in your pantry.

Jeff Edwards: Okay, we're back. This is Jeff Edwards. This is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program with Jerry Erschabeck and Roberta Luke. Roberta, since you're our guest today, what do you have on top of your mind that you'd like to talk about?

Roberta Luke: Well, I hope everybody is getting ready to plant their gardens or some of them might have already planted their gardens. I have not yet.

Jeff Edwards: Some of them have. It's a little too early to plant outside, I think.

Roberta Luke: Yes.

Jeff Edwards: Considering the weather this week. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: I was going to say we had 32 last night. I ran out and checked my apples, and they're looking okay. They were leafing out and they are about a half an inch. So I think they made it through at my place.

Jeff Edwards: I think apples will be okay at 27 maybe, but anything below that, they'll be in trouble. Jerry, before we go any further, since we're talking about blooming things, I got to tell you, you need to have your brother check his apricot tree because my mother says that her tree in Riverton is absolutely loaded again this year.

Jerry Erschabeck: Isn't that fantastic? I was talking to my brother just yesterday. The apricot tree that bloomed last year [00:03:00] is not blooming but the one right next to it is really doing well and blooming out a storm. He was surprised and so was I that after all our cold weather that we've had intermittently through the past couple of weeks, that he still has some apricot bloom, so yay.

Jeff Edwards: I got to tell you, my mom gave me, we've talked about this before, gave me [inaudible 00:03:24] seeds starts from her apricot tree. I have three growing in my yard and I'm convinced that they're sterile males. I don't think they're ever going to bloom. They're probably 12-15 feet tall right now. I've trimmed on them and hacked on them and trying to get them to do what they need to do. I've decided I'm just going to let them go wild because there isn't a thing they're doing right now. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, I think that you should just have some patience with your apricots because my brother's trees are like 25 feet tall. He got them from my neighbor who was eating apricots and just spit the seed out, and voila, 20 years later, we all have apricots trees.

Jeff Edwards: A Johnny apricot seed.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. My brother's apricot trees, they are a really pretty tree. They're just a nice, robust tree whether they get fruit or not.

Jeff Edwards: You have no idea what variety they are?

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, heavens no.

Jeff Edwards: Okay, right. I don't either but I'm hoping I'm still alive by the time they start producing fruit. [LAUGHTER] Roberta, do you have fruit trees other than apple trees?

Roberta Luke: Yeah, I have a pear tree and some cherry trees. I just had to replant some of the cherry trees. They pretty much died out when we got that bad freeze a couple of years ago. I replanted some of those.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, unfortunately that happens. We have to be aggressive gardeners and just take care of them instead of trying to nurse them along. It's a hard decision, right? Diane and I have two honey locusts in our yard that we planted as sticks. About five, eight years ago, we had a pretty significant hail out here. Two of the three took the brunt of it and just have never fully recovered. Now, we have secondary pests and they are pretty much 90 percent dead except coming up from the bottom. So I will be taking them out and throwing them into the burn pile, which is also depressing. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Jeff, have you ever thought about grafting your rosebud onto the bottom of one of those? Would that work?

Jeff Edwards: I don't think so, I think they're too far apart relationship-wise to have that graft successfully take. I don't think they're in the same family. [00:06:00] I think honey locusts or more bean type plant-related and roses are not, so I just don't think that they would survive.

Jerry Erschabeck: Even if it's a rosebud tree? A rosebud tree is still a rose?

Jeff Edwards: They'd have to be in the Rosaceae family and I don't know anything about a rosebud tree.

Jerry Erschabeck: I'll be darned. So that's the secret about grafting, is they have to be in the same family?

Jeff Edwards: Right. They have to be fairly closely related. You can purchase those, what do they call those, fruit salad trees that have a pear and an apple and maybe something else all grafted onto the same tree. I've never seen one of those actually produce all the three varieties of fruit at the same time so I don't think that's a really good way to go. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: Yeah. Wasn't there a tomato like that too?

Jeff Edwards: A potato crossed with a tomato or something?

Roberta Luke: Yes.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, I think I've seen those. I don't think you're going to be happy with either one of the crops that you get off of that particular plant.

Roberta Luke: I don't think so either. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: You get stumped like labradoodles, but they're all dogs, right?

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Jerry Erschabeck: But in plants, you have to have something that's pretty close.

Jeff Edwards: Right. Yes. I think that's a topic we don't want to go down, Jerry.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, no. [LAUGHTER] Just running through my mind.

Roberta Luke: Isn't most apple trees grafted onto a crab apple tree?

Jeff Edwards: Well, it depends. I don't know that they're necessarily grafted onto a crab apple, but I think that they are grafted onto varieties that are more cold-tolerant so that we can grow different varieties further north. But the majority of the apple trees that we get are grafted on to some other rootstock just to help their survivability. I actually have one that was a flowering crab, non-fruiting crab that I know was grafted onto something else. The top died off and the something else is living. So the new apple tree that I have actually produces fairly decent-sized apples when it started out to be a fruitless flowering crab. [LAUGHTER]

But it's an ugly tree, I don't know if I'm going to keep it or not but it's one of the only ones that's surviving as far as the flowering crabs that I had. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Sometimes, you even want to keep those ugly trees. They may blossom into a swan.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, exactly. In Wyoming, we want to keep every tree we possibly can, right?

Jerry Erschabeck: Right.

Roberta Luke: Right.

Jeff Edwards: So Jerry, rototilling festival is over, right?

Jerry Erschabeck: [00:09:00] For the most part, yes. We have rototilled. We've started making our walk paths. We've put up a hog paneling for vertical growing and continue to rake and make the walking paths hardpan. It's easier to get around in walking on uneven soil, but there's a couple of spots where I'm thinking of growing corn, and so I want a furrow. That means that the rototiller has a furrow attachment. I want to make two rows of corn with a furrow in the middle. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: When you put the furrow in, do you flood irrigate right down the middle of them?

Jerry Erschabeck: Yes, I will.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. Yeah. [OVERLAPPING] Go ahead.

Jerry Erschabeck: I'll flood irrigate and as well sprinkle. I find that for myself and my activities, I use a sprinkler. I know that a lot of people say you're just inviting weeds. I said, well, that's our activity, that's our exercise. The furrow will catch both rainwater, sprinkle water, and irrigation water.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. Roberta, I'm guessing you garden, you have a vegetable garden, is that correct?

Roberta Luke: Yeah, I'm putting in a new one this year because I'm running out of space. [LAUGHTER] It's one that I've had compost sitting there for many, many years. It's a good, I don't know, 30 by 20. Then I have another one that's about 30, well, it's probably 30 by 40, and I put new manure on it. We did till it up to about eight inches or so, and so that's where we're at/ That's all I'm right now, which after last night, I'm glad that I haven't put anything in the ground because [LAUGHTER] it would not have been good. So, I'm putting in a little bit more corn and green beans than I usually have.

Jeff Edwards: What do you primarily like to grow?

Roberta Luke: Flowers. [LAUGHTER] That's usually my go-to, flowers and roses.

Jeff Edwards: Do you prefer annuals or perennials?

Roberta Luke: Perennials, oh yeah. I've started just doing lots of shrubs because it's a lot easier. So I've been putting in a lot of shrubs around. Some that are definitely hardy, that'll last out here.

Jeff Edwards: Jerry, are you a shrub kind of guy?

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, yes. I have been, and we are now in our second year of forsythia. I'm going to do a shout out to our mayor of Torrington, Wyoming. He has a forsythia growing on his front porch in a container.

Jeff Edwards: I've driven past that and noticed that. [00:12:00]

Jerry Erschabeck: It is doing well. I need to call and talk to him about whether he puts the plant back into the garage during the winter.

Jeff Edwards: It's not a plastic one, is it? [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] I don't know. I'll have to confirm that as well. That would be a great one to do.

Jeff Edwards: It would. It would be perfect.

Jerry Erschabeck: Whether or not he put his in the garage, I don't know, but we have ours in a couple of small cement planters and we left them outside and they overwintered well and they are now starting to bloom, so I'm really appreciating those. They have just such a nice yellow bloom. And as well, we also had sumac, and Roberta, if you water them, they will grow. And they will grow in response to where you water. [OVERLAPPING] They'll follow that line, and if you don't want them somewhere, it's a booger trying to get rid of them. But hey, congratulations, they are lovely.

Roberta Luke: I need some windbreak.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Roberta Luke: I'm going to give it a try.

Jeff Edwards: One of the things that I really like and enjoy are viburnums. Have either of you had experience with viburnums?

Roberta Luke: I've tried them. I don't know if it's my salty water. [OVERLAPPING] I actually have got one spirea that has actually lived three years. It must be the salty water. Just gets them.

Jeff Edwards: Interesting. We've got six I believe in our landscaping and then we just planted three more. But the ones that have been around the longest which I think is eight or nine years, they're probably almost eight feet tall.

Roberta Luke: Is it the snowball viburnum?

Jeff Edwards: No, I don't know what variety it is, but it's not the snowball. It's something else. I really would like to get the Korean spice viburnum. I don't know if you guys have ever smelled that one when it's blooming but it is a really nice, pleasant odor that that one gives off. We're just on the edge of the USDA growth zone where it tolerates and I think you'd have to put it in a really protected area in order to get it to go. But viburnums bloom, they produce interesting little flowers and fruit. Unfortunately, the squirrels like them. [LAUGHTER] So you're feeding the squirrels eventually too, but it all blends together, right?

Jerry Erschabeck: Right.

Roberta Luke: [OVERLAPPING] I do have a hedge of lilacs but they're not as hardy as everybody thinks. I've had to put palette windbreaks behind them to survive.

Jeff Edwards: Creating microclimates to get things to work. Yeah.

Roberta Luke: This is probably the fifth year. [00:15:00] They're probably about five feet tall.

Jeff Edwards: I've spent this spring trimming our lilacs. We have a hedge that's 25 feet long. Then we have some type of miniature lilac. I don't know what it is. [OVERLAPPING]

Roberta Luke: Is it that Miss Kim?

Jeff Edwards: Yes, I believe so. Now, those things are very woody, very tough, and I'm convinced that lilacs are nothing but weeds. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: They can be.

Jeff Edwards: So if you guys ever make it to my house and you look at my lilac hedge, you're going to go, "Holy cow! You really went after them with the pruners." Well, if you're an arborist, yes, I went after them with the pruners and really thinned them out. But if you're an entomologist and you look at them, you realize that there's a bunch of different things going on. I had scale insects, I have lilac borer, and I have those black notcher weevils. So I have three different pests that were just really going after them, so I got in there early and trimmed out a lot of the older wood where I knew that the lilac borers were in and put them in the burn pile, and hopefully I can eliminate that and now I can do a little spring maintenance. I opened the canopy up. I know that everybody says don't trim your lilacs in the springtime, but again, I'm not an arborist. I had other reasons to trim. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: Yeah. This year you probably won't get a good bloom, but next year you're going to be amazed because I had to do that with the old Harison's rose, which is also called the Oregon Trail rose. The year my daughter graduated, 2015, I thought, "I can't wait. I'm going to have it outside. It's going to be beautiful, it's going to be everywhere." It did not do anything. So that summer, after it bloomed, I got in there and cleaned all the dead out. [NOISE] It was amazing. The next year, it was [inaudible 00:17:11] gorgeous [NOISE] good bloom the next year for sure.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, yeah. They're going to bloom again this year too. But last year was the first year out of eight or nine years that they did bloom. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING] To me, it's a hedge. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

Roberta Luke: I have mine on the east, so it does pretty good. It blooms, but I have to trim it back. I trimmed it back a lot in that video on the Master Gardener page. One of them, I wanted to bloom and cut and prune back because it was eight feet tall.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Sorry, Jerry, I'm talking over the top of you. It's funny, the different techniques that people use to prune [00:18:00] lilacs. Particularly to me, going about two-and-a-half feet tall and just trimming everything off.

Roberta Luke: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] Is that your method, Jerry?

Jerry Erschabeck: No, it hasn't. My wife won't let me do that. I go after old stock. But our lilac bushes, gee whiz, I can't even imagine. It's 50 years old at least and very hardy, very very hardy. So I only go after old stock, but I've had neighbors that just like you taken them down eight inches above the ground and they come back to ten foot again. Takes a couple of years, but gee whiz, they are so hardy, you can really abuse them and still they'll be okay. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: I'm sorry. I keep talking over you. [OVERLAPPING] I look at them now [LAUGHTER] and the suckers are just exploding out of the crown, and that's what I was trying to eliminate to begin with so I'm probably going back in and just trim them off again before the end of the season just to get rid of the [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: Backhoe works. Backhoe works pretty good too.

Jeff Edwards: I don't have one of those. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: If you're really wanting to take care of your lilacs, a backhoe is probably the best thing.

Jeff Edwards: Right. Yes. [LAUGHTER] All good stuff. I think this is a time where we can take a natural break and listen to more from our sponsors, so we'll be back in a bit.

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Jeff Edwards: All right, we're back. This is Jeff Edwards. This is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program with Jerry Erschabeck and Roberta Luke today. And we're spending some time talking about shrubs. We haven't quite mentioned pumpkins yet. Do you want to mention pumpkins now? [OVERLAPPING] Talk about pumpkins?

Jerry Erschabeck: Sure. I can always mention pumpkins. [LAUGHTER] We're still giving out seeds with the giant pumpkin contest and we're still having the availability through the extension office. We're requesting that you call [00:21:00] and make arrangements. The number is [307] 532-2436, and we have a question to the audience to see if we can give away a couple of the seeds that our Wyoming pumpkin grower won and beat the Wyoming record. His name was Andy Corbin and his pumpkin weighed 1,491 pounds. That's huge for Wyoming. Well, when we're talking about the world record, that's somewhere around 24, 2,500 pounds, which is absolutely a small house. But we have a question that whoever can call in to the radio station and have the correct answer, they're going to have two of his Wyoming record-breaking pumpkin seeds.

Jeff Edwards: The first person to call in with the correct answer.

Jerry Erschabeck: With the correct answer.

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Jerry Erschabeck: We always talk about, well, we don't always, but we've talked about companion planting in the past, and besides pumpkin, there's two other things that they plant together, formally known as the Three Sisters. If you can tell us what the other two sisters are, pumpkin being one, you can win those pumpkin seeds from Andy Corbin and pick them up at the radio station. How about that? So get your pumpkin seeds, and if you don't win the giant pumpkin seeds, call out to the extension, make arrangements, and get some seed and put them in the ground. It's not too late. Oh my word, it's not too late. Some people direct seed and that's like after the 15th or the 20th, and some of us will plant our seed prior in a container and then transplant it.

Roberta Luke: I have done that. Yes. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: You have?

Roberta Luke: I have three of them growing right now. They're about two feet and they are ready to go outside.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh yeah.

Roberta Luke: I suppose I should make a little tent for them. It's what I'm going to have to do.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. Now, I spoke with Andy the other day and he said, yes, he puts heat coil in the ground first off, then he builds a little plastic, kind of like low tunnel, and then he has a bigger plastic higher tunnel. So he's insulated twice plus has a heater in there, a little portable heater. He's really going after it big time. That's some of the problem with a smaller grower that doesn't have quite the capability or the initiative to put all that effort into it. So Roberta, if yours get to be too big, are you going to pinch it back? Are you going to do something [00:24:00] to curtail it?

Roberta Luke: Well, actually, it's already put on some buds and I pinched those back. I just had to because [LAUGHTER] I was afraid of it blooming before I even got it outside. I do want to say that Andy Corbin has a Facebook page, it's Pumpkin Fanatic. If you want to go see his pumpkin plant, it is huge. One of the leaves is probably two feet wide already.

Jerry Erschabeck: Wow.

Roberta Luke: I know Jay Richards from Worland, his Facebook page is Jay's Giants I believe, if anybody wants to go see his. Both of them are the top three competitors in the state. It's always good to see other people's pumpkins. That is one of the reasons why I had to make more garden space, because [LAUGHTER] I didn't have any place to put my pumpkin. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Well, that one plant will occupy the whole 30 by 30 space, right, Roberta?

Roberta Luke: Yes. Pretty much. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: It certainly can. But you can grow in as little as 10 by 10 and still have a fairly larger than what you would normally think of pumpkin. Even if you have a pumpkin of 250 pounds, that's a significant pumpkin and one worthy enough to come to the Growers Association weigh-off and weigh it and say, "Hey, look at me," or, "Hey, maybe I could get a small prize because what if everybody else gets hailed out?" You still have a pumpkin to weigh.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Jerry, if you had an appropriately container, can you grow the pumpkin in the container?

Jerry Erschabeck: To start it out, but not to grow it in a container. The roots mimic the vine. If [OVERLAPPING] you've ever seen a pumpkin vine, holy cow. Just imagine that root underneath the ground that mimics the vine.

Jeff Edwards: Right.

Jerry Erschabeck: I think that you would really stunt the plant, and you would get something but I wouldn't imagine you'd get anything that weighed significantly large for that container plant.

Jeff Edwards: Unless you were direct feeding it fertilizer. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: I think it still needs those roots.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] Yeah.

Roberta Luke: That's one of the main things is the vine. The whole vine as it goes along, it has roots every little section, and that is what gives the energy to the pumpkin and the weight.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, as well. That's called a leaf juncture and that's where two leaves come up, and if you put a little bit of soil on top of that leaf juncture, and if you happen to pull those up, you'll see that there's roots coming off of that leaf juncture.

Jeff Edwards: [00:27:00] So you basically have to be a pretty dedicated individual to grow a big pumpkin.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh no, no. [LAUGHTER] We've had winners in the past that have said-

Jeff Edwards: This came out of my compost pile. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Or I threw the seed in the ground, gave it a drink of water and a kiss, and walked away. [LAUGHTER] Gosh, I've had third place winners, fourth place winners that that's their exact MO, I put it in the ground, I gave it a drink of water, gave it a kiss, and walked away.

Jeff Edwards: And brought it here today. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah and brought it here. Look at my pumpkin! [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

What did you do?

Did you not hear me? I said I put it in the ground, gave it water, gave it a kiss, walked away.

Jeff Edwards: Roberta, as you are preparing your garden space and thinking about things to get into it, have you been able to find all of the seeds that you have wanted or did you order early and those types of things?

Roberta Luke: Well, actually, no. I did go online and there was a lot of varieties that wasn't there. I think I did that early March. There was a lot of bean seeds, shortage of beans and peas and carrots. So I just picked a different variety of some seed, but yeah, there was a shortage for sure.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. So if people want beans and peas and those types of things, if you can find dried ones in the store, you can plant those, right?

Roberta Luke: Right.

Jeff Edwards: The package that you buy on the store up on a shelf to eat, to make bean soup, you can plant those and have beans. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Wait a minute.

Jeff Edwards: What?

Jerry Erschabeck: Really?

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: [OVERLAPPING] I never knew that.

Jeff Edwards: Well, they aren't treated with anything so there isn't any reason why if you just go buy them off the shelf, you can't grow them.

Jerry Erschabeck: So one would normally want to soak those because they are older beans, correct?

Jeff Edwards: Potentially, yeah. I would go through them and take out all the busted halves or whatever if they're busted or cracked, and look for some nice, decent beans that are still in good shape and put them in the ground, water the heck out of them.

Jerry Erschabeck: There you go.

Jeff Edwards: Put it in the ground, water it, kissed it, walked away. It was okay. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. My sentiments exactly.

Jeff Edwards: There's some things out there if there are ever a lot of shortages that you can still just go to the store and grow.

Jerry Erschabeck: My one thing that I do know, if we take a stock of celery that you buy at the store and you're cutting it. If you cut the, I'm going to call it the butt-in off of the celery, about two-and-a-half inches, put it in water, it'll re-root and regrow.

Jeff Edwards: Have you ever tried it?

Jerry Erschabeck: No. But I've seen it on [00:30:00] the Internet.

Jeff Edwards: It will regrow, but is it going to be edible? That's the [LAUGHTER] the other part. It might just be stew celery at that point.

Jerry Erschabeck: Well. All right. I need to try what I'm talking about.

Jeff Edwards: Apparently, you can do the same thing with pineapple. Cut the top off, plant the top.

Jerry Erschabeck: I know they talk about, and Roberta, have you ever heard this, that you take a stalk of your rosebush and put it into an apple or a potato and wait for it to grow?

Roberta Luke: I heard that in [inaudible 00:30:32] Actually, I was just reading up on the Harison's rose which is the yellow rose that we see. That's how they brought them from back east. I think a guy back in New Jersey, and he brought it on the Oregon Trail, and that's how they did it. [OVERLAPPING] They put it in a potato [LAUGHTER] and brought it out. I haven't tried it.

Jerry Erschabeck: Roberta, this Oregon Trail rose, is that the nice, wild yellow rose?

Roberta Luke: Yes.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, yeah. I love those.

Roberta Luke: Yeah. It's either called the Oregon Trail or the Harison's rose. It doesn't last very long; it's just a five-petal rose. Well, no, it's a little bit more than that, but smells really wonderful.

Jerry Erschabeck: You bet. Now, do you know the name of the pink rose that accompanies that?

Roberta Luke: I just think that's an old-fashioned rose that they found in the cemeteries. I don't know the name of it. I call mine Caroline because I have a friend that I got it from.

Jerry Erschabeck: Her name was Caroline?

Roberta Luke: Yes.

Jeff Edwards: That's one good way to do it.

Roberta Luke: Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: That's how we name our cats, is all of our relatives. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Is it too late to be trimming roses or is now a good time to be trimming roses?

Roberta Luke: It's probably a little bit too late but you could still get in there. If you see some stems that do not have any buds, definitely you want to go ahead and trim those off. This range, it's going to do wonders for them. I've fertilized them already, the first fertilizing, the first setting, whatever, and I've trimmed pretty much all of them.

Jeff Edwards: I'll let Diane know it's time to fertilize them. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: Yes, it is.

Jerry Erschabeck: Then what do you fertilize with, Roberta?

Roberta Luke: Well, I always just buy the Bill's Rose Food because it's for Wyoming, it's for our soils, and he's got sulfur and calcium and everything in there.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, it's formulated for our area and it does wonders [00:33:00] for roses.

Jerry Erschabeck: You must get out there and trim on roses really fast because I think we're way behind trimming. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: Well, I did it actually the 1st of March when it was really nice. You need to do it before there's any buds that appear. If there's little teeny tiny ones, it's okay, and then you just trim off all the dead and open it up, kind of like an apple tree. You want it to be in the shape of a vase and you want all the buds to face outward so that the rose grows outward and not inward.

Jerry Erschabeck: No crossing branches?

Roberta Luke: No crossing branches. One thing I did forget on the video is there's different kinds. Like a climber, you definitely- There's going to be some dead stems in it but you don't prune as hard as you would a shrub bush. I don't have any hybrid teas. I'm sure a lot of those hybrid teas, they cut down all the way to the bottom and let grow again. It's probably not super late, but with this warm weather, I bet a lot of them are leafed out.

Jeff Edwards: What about pruning in the fall for roses?

Roberta Luke: You could prune it, you would just prune out the dead stems.

Jeff Edwards: Is it a personal preference thing?

Roberta Luke: It is, sort of. I mean, if there's any dead, you could prune it out in the fall. You can tell if there's a stem that's dead and crossing. They prefer to do it when everything's dormant but it would be okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, I've also heard that when you put a rose to bed, and that's after it's totally frosted and everything is non-growing, to actually make your rose stems bare to keep insects from harboring over winter. They take a nice leather glove on and put a leather glove on and then strip all the cane spare. Have you ever heard of that?

Roberta Luke: No. After it has froze, then you could go in and trim them a little bit to put under a protector or a bucket or something, but I've never done that. I don't know.

Jeff Edwards: I don't think I'd want that job either.

Roberta Luke: No, [LAUGHTER] believe me. Yeah. Some of those wild ones and that yellow Harison's rose, oh my goodness, the thorns on that, they're nasty.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. We had a bunch of elm trees growing in our rosebush like that. I took Jeff's advice of cutting the tree down to about six inches and then painting [00:36:00] it with glyphosate within 10 minutes, and we've rid ourselves of those nasty, pesty trees that seem to come up in our bushes.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, and I've re-read the label on that and I've been trying to figure out the best timing when to do that application, and the label of the product that I was looking at says that the tree is actively growing. So leafed out, doing its thing, that's the time to cut it off and treat it. I think the reasoning behind that is because all of the nutrients are either traveling up or traveling down and you're able to get the glyphosate down into the roots and totally kill the tree. But make sure if you choose to do that, you read the label and you pick a product that actually says it on the label, that you can do that type of a treatment.

Jerry Erschabeck: It didn't seem to harm the rose bush that was right next to it.

Jeff Edwards: No, they warn you that it's possible that if the roots are touching and they graft together or those types of things, that the product can transfer from one plant species to another, but I've never seen that. I just think it pretty much stays where you put it as long as you're applying it directly where you want it.

Jerry Erschabeck: Have either one of you planted your onions yet?

Jeff Edwards: Yes. Diane has planted onions and we had some over winter last year because she forgot where they were at. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] Are those the bunching onions?

Jeff Edwards: What do you mean by bunching onions?

Jerry Erschabeck: The onions that seem to come back year after year. It's called bunching onions?

Jeff Edwards: Could be. I think these are just seed sets that got planted that we forgot. [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: [inaudible 00:37:47] else? Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Bulb sets. Not seed sets, bulb sets. Then the new ones she planted this year I believe are bulbs too.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. We plant the plant, is that what you call it? We have little plants that we plant.

Jeff Edwards: Seedling, yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Seedlings, and we planted four.

Jeff Edwards: Hundred?

Jerry Erschabeck: Four 10-foot rows.

Jeff Edwards: Ten foot rows.

Jerry Erschabeck: The rows are eight inches apart and then I have a walk space on either side. That's how I really like to plant those onions as well as garlic.

Jeff Edwards: I keep accusing Diane that she's trying to hide onions in my food.

[LAUGHTER] I'm not a big fan. I'll tolerate onions before I'll tolerate beets, but she's always trying to hide them some place. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, Myrna always says, they say, "Well, how did you fix this?", and you go, "Well, you start off with the big three: garlic, onions, and a little butter.

[LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, I'll take garlic anytime.

Jerry Erschabeck: You're not such a fan of onions? Hmm.

Jeff Edwards: Not really.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, man. My uncle, [00:39:00] I don't know if it's a sweet vidalia, but he can take an onion and eat it like an apple.

Jeff Edwards: Good for him.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, good for him. [LAUGHTER] Whoa!

Jeff Edwards: You don't want to be around [OVERLAPPING] [LAUGHTER] [inaudible 00:39:14]

Jerry Erschabeck: I'll tell you, you have a sore throat and you suck on a little piece of an onion, it'll take your sore throat away.

Jeff Edwards: It's got to be doing something to you.

Jerry Erschabeck: But you have bad breath, and I'll tell you, for days.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Just not my thing.

Jerry Erschabeck: Have you ever had a mock orange bush?

Jeff Edwards: I have three mock orange bushes.

Jerry Erschabeck: We have one, it's about seven foot tall now, I don't know, six or seven feet around.

Jeff Edwards: [OVERLAPPING] They kinda go everywhere and do odd, little things when they're growing.

Jerry Erschabeck: What a nice fragrant little bush that is.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, they really are. They call them mock oranges because they smell like citrus when they're blooming. It's a little white flower. Roberta, do you have any of those?

Roberta Luke: I don't. That's something I need to look into. Is it easy to grow in the wind?

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh yeah.

Jeff Edwards: The three that we have are on the very windy side of a bed that we have and they're doing fine.

Roberta Luke: Good.

Jeff Edwards: But it is one of those things that you have to go in and prune. [LAUGHTER] Trim them up because they remind me of those crooked canes, those walking sticks that folks have that are really spirally and bent and weird. To me, that's how they grow and it reminds me of those things. [NOISE] But they're wispy and they can- All over, but I think if you keep them pruned and you keep the older wood, then you can get them to grow up straight and tall, and they're a really nice plant.

Jerry Erschabeck: Then we also have a sweet almond that has bloomed, and that is a nice pink little flower, such a nice, light fragrant flower.

Jeff Edwards: Has that bloomed already, Jerry?

Jerry Erschabeck: It has. There's some that are coming up that are the young growth, the young sprouts, and they're late bloomers versus the rest of the bush, or the shrub. They're blooming a little bit and they're really nice.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. Very good. I mentioned that I'm not an arborist, and when I do trim my shrubs, I have a specific type of image in mind when I'm trimming. I want my shrubs to grow up, and if there are limbs that are laying over, if they're in the way of something, it's difficult to get mulch in there and it's difficult to manage it each year, so I go in and I try to trim my [inaudible 00:41:49] so that they grow upward. Reach to the sky, right?

Roberta Luke: One main leader, that's the key. As a Master Gardener, we've gone on [00:42:00] several yard calls and, oh my goodness, I can't believe the trees that I've seen, that instead of a tree, they're a bush. People just need to remember they just need one leader and trim it up. So, do you want to walk underneath it? Then you need to trim it five, six feet, all those limbs. That's one of the keys.

Jeff Edwards: Or mow underneath it so that it's not snagging you in the head when you're trying to mow underneath it.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, I've heard and I've been accused of cutting it, and Amy Seiler says, "Hey, make a mulch ring around that bottom of the tree so you now distance yourself away from that limb." But I'm swearing to you, if that limb catches me in the top of the head...

Jeff Edwards: It's out of there.

Jerry Erschabeck: It's out of there! [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: We have some really large cottonwoods on our property. For whatever reason, the lower limbs start to grow downward, and if they start touching me, they're gone.

Jerry Erschabeck: They're gone. [LAUGHTER] Hopefully, the arborists that are listening will send you dirty emails.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, yeah. [LAUGHTER] I fully expect it. if Amy is listening, I'm sure she'll give me a call and say, "Now, cut that out. Stop promoting that kind of stuff." [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Something I did see that I would like to share is if we buy vegetables out of the grocery store, we need to wash them off, but there's some people that propose to soak them in salt water. There's a lot of things that come out of that water because of the salt. The salt will make critters hyperactive and come out of your lettuces and spinaches, that sort of thing. So I found that really interesting. I just wanted to share that.

Roberta Luke: Well, especially your garden [inaudible 00:43:58] [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: I'm trying to understand that, but go ahead, Roberta. [LAUGHTER]

Roberta Luke: Well, I just going to say my own lettuce had a few worms. And you can soak them in the sink with salt water or rinse them really well. It seems to get rid of all the little pests that want to be in there.

Jerry Erschabeck: Just to have a little bit cleaner vegetable coming into your table.

Jeff Edwards: To pre-salt your produce.

Roberta Luke: Yes. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: I don't think that carries over.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. All right.

Jerry Erschabeck: All right.

Jeff Edwards: Since you've taken time talking about pumpkins, I want to talk about my sweet corn.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: It's like almost a foot tall.

Roberta Luke: Wow.

Jeff Edwards: In the high tunnel.

Roberta Luke: In the high tunnel. [LAUGHTER] Good.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, this is not transplanted corn, correct?

Jeff Edwards: This is not transplanted corn, this is direct seated right into the ground. I think we started planting the colder tolerant crops the first day of spring [00:45:00] and then I think the first day of April was when I put the corn in the ground.

Roberta Luke: What variety did you plant?

Jeff Edwards: It's the same variety that we've always grown, it's called montauk. It's a normal long day variety, it matures, maybe it's medium day, it's like 78 day, something like that. But I'm hoping to have sweetcorn by, eh, middle of July. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Good on you.

Jeff Edwards: It won't be the fourth but it'll be sometime in July. [LAUGHTER] We've really been producing a lot in the high tunnel. We've got greens and things that we're harvesting, and we're almost 100 percent planted in there. We've got our tomatoes going and cabbage and kale.

Roberta Luke: Your cantaloupe or muskmelon? Do you have muskmelon?

Jeff Edwards: No, we plant them outside. I don't like to waste good growing space on vining stuff. All that stuff can go outside. The only thing that we grow inside are cucumbers and that's one of the last things that we need to get planted, and that's hopefully going to happen this weekend.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, Jeff, can we go back to your corn in the high tunnel?

Jeff Edwards: Sure.

Jerry Erschabeck: Do you plant them at 32 inches per row or do you make sure that that is a little more compacted?

Jeff Edwards: So, I think what you're asking was is it 32,000 plants per acre?

Jerry Erschabeck: No, I was asking 32 inches per row.

Jeff Edwards: My rows apart?

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, rows apart.

Jeff Edwards: Feet apart or inches apart between rows?

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: My rows are 48 inches apart but I plant double rows in each row of corn. The way that I water, I use drip tape, and that drip tape runs right down the center of the row, and then I will plant a little bit heavier than what you normally would outside. I think in two 30-foot rows, and if you're considering it to be four rows, I have 75 plants or so in there.

Roberta Luke: How many inches between each plant? Like six inches?

Jeff Edwards: Four to six.

Roberta Luke: Four to six?

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: About 48 inches apart in your row?

Jeff Edwards: Yes. That's just because that's how I design my growing space in the high tunnel. To me, in an enclosed space in a high tunnel, you need to have your plants separated and the growing areas designated. Otherwise, by the end of the season, everything becomes a jungle and you can't get to what you want to harvest. I've seen this in a lot of the high tunnels that we built around the state. People just load them up with plants, and by the end of the season, you can't get to the backside of [00:48:00] whatever you were trying to get to to harvest what you want. So we plant fewer plants but then focus on them so that we can get them harvested.

Roberta Luke: What's your temperature right now in the high tunnel?

Jeff Edwards: Soil temperature is stuck between 40 and 60 degrees, it fluctuates. Last night when it was so cold, it dropped down a little bit, but not terrible changes in soil temperature. On the nice day that we had two weeks ago when it was 70 degrees outside or 88 degrees, or whatever it was, it's 110 degrees in there. So we roll up the sides on those days and try to moderate the temperature a little bit, try to get some air flow going through.

Jerry Erschabeck: Is it true that corn doesn't like to grow after about 101?

Jeff Edwards: There is an upper threshold for all plants. If you've got 101 degrees and it's pollinating, that's a bad thing. You don't want it to be that hot when it's pollinating. Lower 90s are usually optimal for corn.

Jerry Erschabeck: I know I suffer at 101.

Jeff Edwards: I know I suffer at 101 too. [LAUGHTER] Walking in a greenhouse, it's 110. You don't want to be working in there in the afternoon.

Jerry Erschabeck: Holy cow. [LAUGHTER] That almost knocks you over, doesn't it?

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. It's pretty steamy, and you go, "Man, let's make this quick and get the heck out of here." [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Do you have automatic openers or are you the opener?

Jeff Edwards: I have two vents at the peak that are automatic, but they're only 12 inches in diameter or 12 inches square. All that does is if it gets really hot, it vents. We have roll-up sides on both sides. Then I've got a Dutch door that opens top and bottom. A lot of the time, I'll leave the top part of the door open just so we can get enough air flow through there.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, I've seen on some high tunnels that they have a crank attached to the bottom side of their plastic and they roll that up. Is that something that you have or do you manually roll it?

Jeff Edwards: I have a PVC crank that I've made, I have a two-inch pipe that runs the length of the high tunnel, and I have a crank that I glued on there, and I can roll up the plastic, not roll it down, I mean roll it up to open it and then roll it down to close it.

Jerry Erschabeck: That makes it really handy I would think.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, I think so. It's not that big a deal. You go outside in the morning and check the stuff out, you roll up the sides. Big deal. Then after it stops freezing or frosting at nighttime, we just leave it up all the time.

Jerry Erschabeck: Anybody that's trying to plant anything, I'd still advise them to watch those overnight lows. Like last night, we had 32, and the rest of this week, [00:51:00] it sounds like it's going to be intermittent cold. I know a lot of people want to get out there and start throwing seeds in the ground, and I think it's a little early to do direct seeding into our soils.

Jeff Edwards: Jerry, local producers are direct seeding right now.

Jerry Erschabeck: Are they really?

Jeff Edwards: Be careful what you say. Corn is going into the ground! [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, oats are going into the ground. I know that for sure. [OVERLAPPING] But even commercial corn is growing into the ground?

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Wow.

Jeff Edwards: It started about the 20th of April.

Jerry Erschabeck: I'll be darned.

Jeff Edwards: Around here anyway. It's time and it's getting closer all the time. Our normal frost day is about May 15th. I would recommend that we wait until after Mother's Day if you're really anxious because there's always some type of a snowstorm that happens on Mother's Day. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: I know the weather's changing though. We used to plant our pumpkins Mother's Day and just get terribly sunburned because you want to get all those pumpkins planted. But now, it seems like we have a storm or at least a rain event.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. I see that we are bumping up against our timeline. Roberta, is there anything else that you would like to add today?

Roberta Luke: Just that if anybody wants some pumpkin seeds, once again, call the extension office and we will give you some seed. We are still planning on having our Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off October 3rd, and along with it, we're going to have lots of events. We did some pumpkin painting last year; it was a big hit. If anybody is interested, just give the extension office a call and we will get some seeds for you.

Jeff Edwards: The number to the extension office one more time?

Roberta Luke: It's [307] 532-2436.

Jeff Edwards: Thank you.

Jerry Erschabeck: Don't forget our question about winning a giant pumpkin seed.

Jeff Edwards: Please call in. Roberta, thank you for being our guest today. Jerry, thank you for being the co-host and helping me keep things on task here.

Jerry Erschabeck: My pleasure. Thank you.

Jeff Edwards: With that, we will be back on the air next Friday.

Narrator: [MUSIC] You've been listening to Lawn and Garden with University of Wyoming Extension specialists Jeff Edwards, and co-host Jerry Erschabeck. Presented by KGOS and KERM Radio in Torrington and by University of Wyoming Extension: growing people, knowledge, and communities.