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Narrator: Welcome to the Lawn and Garden podcast with University of Wyoming Extension Specialist, 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 podcast 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 is Dr. Jerry Erschabeck from Erschabeck Chiropractic. Good morning, Jerry.

Jerry Erschabeck: Good morning, Jeff.

Jeff Edwards: How are you today?

Jerry Erschabeck: Hey, just spectacular. Life is a little crazy, but we are in hope of spring.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, we are. We are in hope of spring. And also with us this morning is Donna Hoffman. She is a horticulturist in Natrona County for UW Extension. Good morning, Donna.

Donna Hoffman: Good to see you guys, and it's nice to visit with everybody.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, we're glad you're with us today. Uh, let's take a few moments and listen to our sponsors, and we'll be back in a minute.

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[MUSIC]

Jeff Edwards: Okay, we're back. This is Jeff Edwards, and this is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program with Jerry Erschabeck and Donna Hoffman. Donna, you get the floor today. What would you like to talk about?

Donna Hoffman: Well, I've been visiting with some of my Master Gardeners about things that they've been starting seeds on and several of them have started seeds. Some of them, I think, got a little overanxious and they're gonna have some kinda leggy plants when we get done with things. And I think some are gonna be right on target and ready to plant out. We'll see how that falls with our work schedules as those unfold in front of us.

Jeff Edwards: What do you mean by leggy plants? Can you describe that for folks?

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. So if plants are planted indoors, especially if they don't have great light indoors, they tend to stretch to reach towards the light and that makes the internode spaces a lot longer than if they had really good, bright light and so they get long [00:03:00] and stretched out, and the term that usually gets used in that is leggy.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. Jerry, are you start- have you started seeds indoors?

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, I have. I had some castor beans that I wanted to start and see if they were viable still because I haven't used those seeds in a long time. And I dug up just a little bit, and I put it

inside my giant elephant ear container and watered in them well, and I see that they are really swelling so they've tripled the size. I imagined there should be something coming out of that seed soon.

Jeff Edwards: So, what do you mean by a giant elephant ear container?

Jerry Erschabeck: Actually, it's not a giant elephant ear container, it's just an elephant ear in a container and I misspoke about using the word giant. [LAUGHTER] But elephant ears really do get quite big. They have really huge leaves.

Jeff Edwards: Okay, I was gonna make a smart aleck comment about elephant ears but, uh, [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: Okay, thank you.

Jeff Edwards: [inaudible 00:04:04] [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: My ears, as you see, are very large as well. [LAUGHTER] That's how you can tell that my brother and I are related, because of the ears.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] Good to know, good to know. So, Donna, I've started some things already in my high tunnel.

Donna Hoffman: Yes.

Jeff Edwards: I have spinach growing. I have a brassica greens mixture. Diane asked me to buy some vital lettuce mix and for whatever reason, I thought this could be a little bit different but I think it's things like bok choy and maybe some kale [LAUGHTER] growing in it. So, it's going to be different. Um, uh, surprise, let's put it that way.

Donna Hoffman: Right.

Jeff Edwards: And then radishes are already going. And this last week when we had such cold spell, everything we covered up pretty good to try to keep them+ going since, you know, the temperature got down into the single digits.

Donna Hoffman: Right, exactly. So we have our things in the house growing on the end of the kitchen table near the glass sliding door.

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Donna Hoffman: And I've turned the Rubbermaid tub that they've been growing in, that's to make them leak-proof on my dining room table. But I've turned them twice because they are already starting to lean towards the window. And the first time I did it, Mark asked me, "Why did you turn the pots around?" I said, "Well, they're starting to lean towards the light." So they really are probably not getting as much light as they would like to. I'm a little concerned about the cabbage getting leggy and then-

Jeff Edwards: Oh, yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -not being happy when it goes outside so-

Jeff Edwards: Then wanting to fall over when you actually transplant them. Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: Right. [OVERLAPPING] So we'll see how this works out.

Jerry Erschabeck: So Donna, when you say that, "We're afraid of them getting leggy," so should one wait a little longer for certain plants to plant?

Donna Hoffman: [00:06:00] Well, the ones that we tend to get a little overanxious about are the ones that take such a long season, and usually it's the peppers and the tomatoes. And tomatoes, you can always transplant them a little deeper when you transplant them if they get leggy, because they will grow roots along those node tissue, the internode tissues and root in the ground no matter how deep you bury them. But peppers, if they have a long, stretched out stem and then they start producing a lot of fruit, can get pretty top-heavy which is really hard on those stems to hold everything up. So the stem can become weakened in the process, and that's what I'm kinda concerned about with those cabbage. If you produce a really large head of cabbage on a fairly weak stem that's stretched out because it had lower light when it was first germinating it, it can cause problems later on.

Jeff Edwards: It's best to have short growth on cabbage, otherwise, they'll just kinda lay over and then sit on top of the soil. They will still grow and produce but it's just different.

Donna Hoffman: I may have to figure out some sort of a doughnut support system [LAUGHTER] under the cabbage for this summer. I don't know, but-

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, I've tried growing cabbage in a pallet and that seemed to work out really, really well.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: So it took the cabbage off of the ground-

Donna Hoffman: Uh-huh.

Jerry Erschabeck: -and it made the bottom leaves a little cleaner and a little easier to throw dust on it.

Donna Hoffman: Good.

Jerry Erschabeck: Uh, like a seven, like-

Donna Hoffman: Uh-huh.

Jerry Erschabeck: -excuse me, like a, uh, [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Like [inaudible] product.

Jerry Erschabeck: There you go.

Jeff Edwards: So Jerry, did you grow those vertically or did you let them grow through the slats of the pallet or, uh, flat on the ground?

Jerry Erschabeck: I put the pallet flat on the ground-

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: -and it really seemed to make a lot of that bottom leaf- You get so much splash dirt up on top of that when you water it. I've put a bunch of newspaper underneath the pallet as well and then made a hole, so I didn't have as many weeds. So it really seemed to work out quite well. And then I dug a trench around my pallet so that I could keep my soil uniformly wet. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: That sounds like a really good idea.

Jerry Erschabeck: I think that a lot of cabbages split because they don't have uniform water, that you let them dry out too hard and then you water them really heavy and then they grow and split. Is that correct how that works?

Donna Hoffman: It is, yeah.

Jeff Edwards: That's- that's seem like- [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: I enjoy the show so much because I also learned some great tips from-

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -from the people on your show.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. I've actually seen people where they will tip the pallet on its side and then seal that little spaces underneath and then they have a raised- it's not a raised bed but it's a container garden growing on its side, [00:09:00] basically.

Donna Hoffman: I just wasn't sure if that could handle the weight of the cabbage growing vertically like that.

Jeff Edwards: Well, I'm not necessarily sure that they allow cabbage to grow when it's vertical.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: I think they would choose other things to plant then.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: I think we are on the same page then.

Jeff Edwards: And maybe it's even attached to a wall. [LAUGHTER].

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Or they tripod them and put them in like a teepee-

Donna Hoffman: Sure.

Jeff Edwards: Right.

Jerry Erschabeck: - and grow some stuff like that.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. Yeah. That would probably work, too. Fascinating stuff. Things to try, right?

Donna Hoffman: Yes, exactly.

Jeff Edwards: Especially if people are new gardeners and they're thinking about trying things out this year, uh, that might not have a lot of space and so, you know, container gardening is a really good way to start gardening. Start out small. One of the things that we talk about is, people seem to be hesitant about starting a garden. Well, starting a garden is probably the one of the most inexpensive mistakes that you can make if you are going to make mistakes.

Donna Hoffman: Right.

Jeff Edwards: You can always start over. It's always a new thing, you know. If something doesn't work out, try something a little bit different.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: And we try to avoid the words, "You can't do that." [LAUGHTER] Well, you watch- you watch me, I can do that.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Particularly to gardeners and Master Gardeners, somebody will come in and say, "Oh, you can't do that here." And funny enough, I have been doing it for years and maybe you should do that. [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, you don't wanna get stuck too hard in that disciplinary activity.

Jeff Edwards: Right. Yeah. Yeah. I've seen that often. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: But we've taken some, uh, pallets and what we're gonna do this year is put them flat on the ground and then fill them up with dirt- excuse me, fill them up with soil [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Soil. Now, use the- use the right term, Jerry. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Absolutely. And then, you know, scrape it off so that the wood is exposed a little bit and you just plant in-between the slats.

Jeff Edwards: So why don't you- [OVERLAPPING].

Jerry Erschabeck: As a raised bed.

Jeff Edwards: Why don't you plant your pumpkin right on there like that so that you can get it to the scale at the end of the season?

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, because you need at least about 10 feet away from the mother root as

Jeff Edwards: Oh, okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: -the pumpkin vine grows out and so that quite wouldn't work. You can't do that. [LAUGHTER].

Jeff Edwards: Well, watch me. Watch me. [LAUGHTER].

Donna Hoffman: You could probably put a pallet under it once you pick your pumpkin though, and let it continue to grow on the pallet.

Jerry Erschabeck: Correct.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: You could certainly do that. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Don't you do that normally? Don't you do that normally, Jerry? Put it on a pallet?

Jerry Erschabeck: I don't but some people do. Some people put a piece of Styrofoam underneath it so that it doesn't have any rot under the plant and other people use a fine sand. So, it kind of depends on [00:12:00] what you wanna practice with.

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: Or play with.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: So Donna, we're, you know, May 15th in Goshen County is usually about the last frost-free day. We don't know if that's going to hold or not but [LAUGHTER], um, if, considering the current weather better than we've had lately, if that is true and there are things that people could start indoors, what would you recommend besides tomatoes and peppers?

Donna Hoffman: Uh, okay. So several of the cole crops, which it's kind of derivative of some of the German for those crops is cabbage, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, and cauliflower are all good ones to start indoors. Most of your root crops tend to be ones that do best if you can plant them outdoors, at least in my experience. So radishes, turnip, beets, those you'd want to wait until it's time to plant them directly outdoors in the garden. Any of those that grow directly in the ground and what we pull out the ground is the part that we consume, those I'd recommend just planting directly out in the garden. There are some people who start cucurbits, which include most of our squashes and our cucumbers-

Jeff Edwards: And our pumpkins.

Donna Hoffman: -pumpkins. I have a funny story about pumpkin too, but most of those I've always taken the track, that those do best if you plant them directly outside in a hill. And they don't seem to transplant very well, but there are people who always grow little transplants and transplant them out and do very well with them. So um, that's one that's kind of on the fence on your garden technique and what you've had success with and what you're willing to try and see if it works. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: I've also noticed people will, can, have, transplanted sweet corn. Uh, they will start sweet corn early, and they will transplant it into their garden which is-

Donna Hoffman: I heard that the other day, and I was just kind of dumbfounded about it.

Jeff Edwards: Donna, you were just going, "You can't do that. [LAUGHTER]. It doesn't work." [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: No, my comment really was, I didn't know you could do that.

Jeff Edwards: When we were living in Central Iowa, they would start sweet corn really early and then transplant it out into the field. And that's first time I'd ever heard of it happening, but it was kind of an interesting thing. You know, those guys take sweet corn pretty seriously there, and [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: Very seriously.

Jeff Edwards: -by the 4th of July, they have sweet corn, which is-

[OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: Wow.

Jerry Erschabeck: Wow.

Jeff Edwards: -which is pretty crazy.

Donna Hoffman: I suppose that's how we all get it when we want it for those celebrations in the summertime.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Yes. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: Some of our pumpkin people are crazy enough that they will also do that, plant their pumpkin, and I heard one guy said they were gonna plant last weekend. But the hardest part about transplanting is the cold shock onto plant. But he puts heat tape into the ground.

Donna Hoffman: Uh-huh.

Jerry Erschabeck: [00:15:00] And warms the ground up so that it's not so much of a shock.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: And so, you know, people do some crazy things [OVERLAPPING] in the terms of competition or "I want that first sweet corn by the 4th of July." Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: So I heard another one the other day and I had never heard or tried this, but someone was talking about, they planted in one of those seed trays that just has long channel that you plant the seeds in and then and when you transplant, you just kind of separate the plants rather than them in being in individual cells. And they pinch out the top part of their peas before they transplant them out from growing them in seed indoors, and that makes the plant more bushy.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, okay.

Donna Hoffman: And supposedly, gives it a much higher harvestable product because it causes more flowering. Now, peas are one because they're so cold-hardy, that again, I've always planted them outdoors just directly into the ground. So I'm a little bit curious about trying some peas, starting them indoors, pinching them and maybe keeping them in a little bit separate part of the garden to see if they produce better than the ones that go directly outside. And, I don't know, maybe plant- pinch some of the ones that are planted outside and not pinch some others.

Jeff Edwards: You know, you can do peas in a container fairly easily as long as you have some farm to trellis [OVERLAPPING] them and put them out on your patio. Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: I know that form of pinching works for coleus and makes a coleus flower bush up pretty hard. I've never heard of pinching peas.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. I hadn't either. So, um, yeah. I guess, every time you get the opportunity to watch some other gardener talk about gardening, you're gonna get an idea of what to try and see if it works.

Jeff Edwards: So the more [OVERLAPPING].

Jerry Erschabeck: And it's usually [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Go ahead, Jerry.

Jerry Erschabeck: -and it's usually the old guys that are still gardening and you go in and you say, "Hey, what do you do about this?" And they always have an idea.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah, right. Exactly.

Jeff Edwards: So the moral of this story is there's never one right way to do something [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: Oh, right.

Jeff Edwards: -particularly in gardening, right?

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: So it may work for you, it might not work for somebody else but try. Take some risks.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. It's kind of like Microsoft. There's lots of ways to do the same thing in the program.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] Exactly. So, let's see. So we've transplanted things. Um, we've started things from seed. Oh, you know, you and I, Donna, have been talking. You've been mentioning Brussels sprouts.

Donna Hoffman: Mm-hmm.

Jeff Edwards: Um, Diane and I like Brussels sprouts. I know that they can be [00:18:00] victims. Aphids like them a lot. But I've never actually grown them because I try to avoid plants that are victims, right? Because I don't wanna deal with- [OVERLAPPING] I don't wanna deal with the problems, right? So um, uh, can you walk me through how to grow Brussels sprouts, like, from start to finish?

Donna Hoffman: Well, I'm kind of in the same boat you are. I've never [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Oh, I thought you have grown them. Oh, okay.

Donna Hoffman: No, I've never grown them. Mark and I like them, and we figured we'd grow a couple. We're not huge fans but, you know, a couple on the kebabs in the fall or. His whole family has decided that anything bacon-wrapped is good [LAUGHTER] and we have a Hoffman family reunion this summer. So, anyway, we figured we might do some bacon-wrapped Brussels sprouts.

Jeff Edwards: I'll bet a bacon-wrapped Brussels sprout would be pretty darn good.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: And I think if you cut them in half and wrap them they're a little bit more on the bite-size side-

Jeff Edwards: Sure.

Donna Hoffman: -instead of mouthful. Anyway, what I gather from seeing them in the community gardens up here in Casper, is you kinda plant them out like a cabbage or a cauliflower, but then they grow a pretty hefty kind of broccoli-like stem.

Jeff Edwards: What do you think the soil temperature needs to be? Is that-

Donna Hoffman: It's a cole crop so it- it doesn't need to be very warm. I mean-

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah- [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: And they usually have a long- they usually have a long growing season, like a hundred days, right? Hundred and ten days?

Donna Hoffman: Yeah, a hundred, hundred and ten days. So they're pushing our growing season. If we have a wet spring or an early snow in the fall, they can really be right on the border of not very happy in the garden. But I also understand that kind of like some of those other things, they get a little bit better flavor if they [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: [inaudible 00:20:04].

Donna Hoffman: -get fill in the fall. So anyway, they grow fairly tall. And from what I understand, you can harvest the little sprouts, the heads, that look like a miniature cabbage, and they may send up two new ones from the node where the one came off of.

Jeff Edwards: So as the plant is growing vertically, Brussels sprouts will send out a leaf and they'll also send out what I think would be called a bud where the Brussels sprout comes out at.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: And it comes out on this side near the leaf.

Donna Hoffman: Yes. Yes.

Jeff Edwards: So, um [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: They spiral up the stalk and every place there's a leaf, a sprout comes out and then you harvest the ones from below as more are developing on top. So by the time the fall comes and you're done [00:21:00] harvesting, the bottom stalk maybe completely bare from harvesting and the top still has sprouts on it, um- [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: So I've seen pictures of Brussels sprouts standing in the field, and all the lower leaves have been removed but there's still sprouts on the stalk. So, you can harvest them one at a time going up the stalk, but do you purposely remove the leaves so that the Brussels sprouts can develop further?

Donna Hoffman: I'm, I'm guessing that they want the leaves on there to start with for the photosynthesis to occur. And then as the sprouts develop, that they want the energy to go into the leaves of the sprouts rather than in the large leaves that we don't typically consume.

Jeff Edwards: So maybe we need to do a little more research on the growth and development of Brussels sprouts, huh?

Donna Hoffman: That's a good set of questions there, Jeff.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Okay. So, when Diane and I prepare Brussels sprouts, we usually cut them in half, and, um, cauliflower. We prepare cauliflower with them. Throw them in a plastic bag with olive oil and some salt, shake that up really well, get everything coated and then pour them on a cookie sheet with parchment paper on it and roast them for about 20 minutes at 420 [degrees] or something like that and they're pretty darn good.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah, yeah. Exactly.

Jeff Edwards: They don't need bacon. [LAUGHTER].

Donna Hoffman: Oh, no. [LAUGHTER] Yeah, the Hoffman family actually had some doughnuts last year that had bacon icing on them. So- [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: I have seen doughnuts that have maple bacon icing on them.

Donna Hoffman: Right. Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: And there's just something- I guess that's okay, but, uh, [OVERLAPPING] not, not necessarily something I need to try. [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: I guess, I'm willing to try everything once that I feel like it, but it seems like that needs to go into the category of the hamburgers that are made on a doughnut, you know, you use the doughnut for the bun. So slice that one in a half and put a hamburger in the middle. But then you've gotta decide, do you put ketchup and mustard on it? Then I'm lost. I don't know.

Jeff Edwards: Then wrap the whole thing in bacon.

Donna Hoffman: Oh.

Jeff Edwards: It'll be good.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. So anyway. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: So Jerry, have you had any experience with Brussels sprouts?

Jerry Erschabeck: We have and we grew some one year, and they grew up pretty tall. They grew up about, almost two-and-a-half feet. And mine were bitter. They were just really bitter and I'm not sure what I did wrong. If I didn't water them enough or watered them too much, I don't know.

Jeff Edwards: So my- [OVERLAPPING] go ahead, Donna.

Donna Hoffman: I understand that the cole crops gets somewhat bitter if maybe [00:24:00] they don't get enough water or if they get too hot in the heat of summer which, since Torrington is our banana belt here in Wyoming, if it was a particularly hot summer, which you may or not remember, that may have had something to do with it, but I'm uncertain.

Jeff Edwards: We try not to remember the particularly hot summers.

Donna Hoffman: Oh yeah. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Since we're going down this pathway, do you feel that jalapeños get hotter if they're choked off of water?

Donna Hoffman: I think they do develop more of the oils.

Jeff Edwards: Capsaicin.

Donna Hoffman: The capsaicin oil if they're short on water. And of course, the capsaicin is produced in the placenta of the pod, right, surrounding the seeds, so that part that's attached to the seed is hotter than the tissue that we typically think of as the pepper, the part that we typically eat. So if any of you are wanting the hotter part, it's the portion that you usually cut out when you're trimming the seeds up.

Jerry Erschabeck: Or you spin it all up and use it all.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: So again, on that same note, radishes. If you choke a radish without water and restrict the water, do they get hotter as well?

Donna Hoffman: Absolutely, yes. Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: And so what causes pithiness in a radish?

Donna Hoffman: I think if they go too long with the dry.

Jeff Edwards: If they grow too long?

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Donna Hoffman: And they tend to be some of the ones that we plant early in the season because they're such a quick crop. And I think if they go too late into the heat of summer, then they're thinking that is time to start sending up a flower and sending- starting to reproduce.

Jeff Edwards: Sure.

Donna Hoffman: And once they go into that reproductive state because their flower stalk is so tall, I think that root is kind of protecting itself from the possibility of tipping over or the top lodging falling over, that they get a little bit woody to support that flower structure.

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: So Donna, just like garlic, garlic will put up a big flower stalk and then have scapes on the end of it. Would you recommend cutting off the radish flower?

Donna Hoffman: I'm not a huge fan of the spiciness of radish, a little bit goes a long way for me, so I'm only gonna plant a few of them. And my husband and my dad both like them. So we'll have some, but I wouldn't keep them once they start to produce that flower. Once they start to head out or develop their flower. To me they're done and I would pull them [00:27:00] and either leave that space for something else to grow into or plant something else in that space that can still produce.

Jerry Erschabeck: Donna, have you ever seen radishes being used as a cover crop?

Donna Hoffman: I've heard of it. I actually have not seen it. Jeff's nodding his head so he probably has more experience with that, maybe from the Midwest.

Jeff Edwards: So, they've actually used radishes as a cover crop in this area for a couple of reasons. Um, they used the Daikon type, which are the- they grow really long. They use them to break up hardpan in the soil and then they also use them as feed, livestock feed. So it's usually not a straight radish crop, it's usually mixed with something else and will provide feed for livestock.

Jerry Erschabeck: So [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: And when I was- when I was a teenager, my dad grew turnips for a crop for our sheep, and so I've seen the turnips but not necessarily the radish itself. Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: And do beet growers ever grow radishes to reduce their nematode load?

Jeff Edwards: I have not heard that. I don't know. I don't know.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh. [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: They're in the same family with mustard, so it may be a repellent because of the oils-

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -that radishes produce, but I'm not certain about that either.

Jeff Edwards: I don't know.

Jerry Erschabeck: I know when I rototill radishes, they have a very pungent smell and odor. Horseradish as well has that pungent odor when you rototill it.

[LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: We had somebody in the Master Gardener Program here in Natrona County asking about horseradish the other day, and I got several responses, including one from my husband who's a Master Gardener, um, saying, "I'm not interested. Thank you. No." We tend to agree that it's very much worthwhile to purchase horseradish sauce and not process it. So [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: My brother-in-law gave us a horseradish plant about five years ago. We've never harvested. My Neighbor and I have spoke about the plans to harvest, but we've not harvested yet. And

it makes it a great, great plant. I mean, it grows up three, three-and-half feet. It blooms. It's a lovely plant. It's a little aggressive. You have to keep knocking it back, but it really is pungent when you go over with a tiller.

Jeff Edwards: You can knock it back a little bit with your rototiller every year, Jerry.

Jerry Erschabeck: [OVERLAPPING] We have.

Donna Hoffman: If I remember correctly, uh, you were gonna diminish your use of the rototiller and go a little bit [LAUGHTER] more towards the- the no-till process. How's that going?

Jerry Erschabeck: Uh, not so well. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Wasn't last weekend the annual rototiller festival at your house?

Jerry Erschabeck: [00:30:00] [LAUGHTER] It's coming up. We got sidetracked a little bit and so it's- it's coming up.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. All right. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: But not [OVERLAPPING] too much, Donna. To me using a broad fork is a lot of work.

Donna Hoffman: Uh-huh.

Jerry Erschabeck: And for me, personally, I have my own degenerative changes about myself. And it just seems to be easier to use the rototiller.

Donna Hoffman: Okay. So have you shown him the recreational rototiller video, Jeff?

Jeff Edwards: I do not know if Jerry has seen recreational rototiller video.

Jerry Erschabeck: I have not.

Donna Hoffman: You should [OVERLAPPING] send him the link.

Jeff Edwards: I should probably send him the link. [OVERLAPPING] I might just have to do that.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Uh, hey, we've hit about halfway through our program. Let's take a couple of minutes and listen to our sponsors and we'll be back in a bit.

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 wyoextention.org or visit your county Facebook page.

Narrator: [MUSIC] You are listening to the Lawn and Garden podcast, presented by University of Wyoming Extension, extending the land grant mission across the state of Wyoming with a wide variety of educational programs and services. Visit us at wyoextention.org.

Jeff Edwards: We're back. This is Jeff Edwards. This is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program with Jerry Erschabeck and Donna Hoffman. Glad that you're both with us today. We are talking a little about seed germination, planting plants, planting our garden. I wanted to circle back around and talk a little bit about Brussels sprouts one more time.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: And I apologize for that.

Donna Hoffman: That's okay.

Jeff Edwards: Uh, the information that I've read on Brussels sprouts is they actually serve as the garden's liver, okay? I know that's kinda of a weird analogy. But if you have- well, let me put it this way. The Soviet Union actually uses Brussels sprouts as a toxic waste soils clean-up.

Donna Hoffman: Uh-huh.

Jeff Edwards: If they're reclaiming some land that has been messed up somehow, they will go in and apparently Brussels sprouts will remove things like heavy metals from the soil. So if you have weird things in your soil, Brussels sprouts might pull them up into the plant. It's just something that I read at one point in time and I thought, "Well, um, okay." [LAUGHTER] So Brussels sprouts are good. They're tasty. They're nutritious.

Donna Hoffman: So you know there is a word for that, right?

Jeff Edwards: Uh, no.

Donna Hoffman: Phyto- phytoremediation.

Jeff Edwards: There you go. [00:33:00] That's the word.

Donna Hoffman: So when I was in Laramie, I was active in the Greenbelt Committee that worked with Union Pacific Railroad. And they had that tie plant south of I-80-

Jeff Edwards: Uh-huh.

Donna Hoffman: -that was a Brownfield remediation site. That is now a town park and they planted several thousand cottonwood, willow, and other, blue spruce trees down there. And they actually pump water through that system through those trees, and the movement of the water moves the hydrocarbons to the surface, just because of the movement of the water on that site. And they're using the pumping process of the trees to move those hydrocarbons up and out of that site. Then they pump the water off of there and filter off the creosote that had been on that site, and they're actually able to recapture it and send it to another treatment plant and reuse the creosote. But- [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Wow.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Fascinating.

Donna Hoffman: Plants have quite a set of skills that maybe we aren't using to their fullest extent.

Jeff Edwards: I think that's the word of the day, phytoremediation.

Donna Hoffman: Okay. All right.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: So do they ever use phytoremediation with gold mining? Because they use a lot of really harsh chemicals to extract gold.

Jeff Edwards: Like mercury? [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Like mercury. [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: The only- the only place I'm familiar with that has a gold mine is in Nevada. And it's not a place that I would think you'd be pumping lots of water through cottonwood trees. So I'm [LAUGHTER] unfamiliar with that- [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: Or Brussels sprouts.

Jeff Edwards: Or Brussels sprouts.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

[OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Interesting things. Okay, so what else did you guys wanna talk about the rest of the day?

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, I would like to talk about and ask Donna about pruning. Is now the time to prune? Because my apple tree is starting to really bud. And so I know that social distancing for apples is kind of a thing. So we don't want those little bugs budding up against each other and going over to the next apple. Is now a good time to start pruning my apple tree?

Donna Hoffman: So anytime that our trees are dormant is a really great time to be pruning, especially now that for the most part we've gotten out of the extreme cold winter temperatures that we see in December and January. So now is a perfect time to be pruning. The only problem is that if this becomes a year that's wet with a lot of splash around for fire blight, we [00:36:00] may see some reoccurrence of fire blight in those pruning scars. But, it's better to do the pruning than to leave the buds there and have things get all jammed up and tight where microbial activity along with insect activity can be a problem. So yes, now is a great time to be pruning, and it's a good way to get out in the sunshine that we have in the garden, while maybe you're not spending as much time outdoors otherwise.

Jerry Erschabeck: So would you remove any of the buds?

Donna Hoffman: So you don't want to remove the fruiting spurs, the ones that are a couple of inches long and have several flower buds on them. At this point, you want as much blooming as possible, but you want those fruiting spurs spread out so that you don't get a whole cluster of fruit on a branch and then eventually that branch has too much weight on it and it's spread out. So you do some spreading of the the fruiting spurs on the branch. And then after they've bloomed and the fruit is set, then you can thin the fruit so that you don't get too many fruits on an individual fruiting spur.

Jerry Erschabeck: Okay.

Donna Hoffman: So some now and some after fruit set.

Jerry Erschabeck: And when is the best time to put on that- I forget the name of it but it's a sticky stuff that you put on the bark, on the trunk of the tree so that bugs will crawl up and get stuck.

Jeff Edwards: Tanglefoot.

Donna Hoffman: Tanglefoot.

Jerry Erschabeck: Tanglefoot.

Donna Hoffman: I- it was on the tip of my tongue but I knew Jeff would know it, so [LAUGHTER]. Yes. Um, probably you need to put that on after we've had several rainstorms, but before the insects become too active so that that doesn't wash off.

Jerry Erschabeck: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: Uh, it won't wash off.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: Cool. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: [OVERLAPPING] They hold onto your fingers.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: So my brother has this apricot tree, and last year he had just a spectacular array of apricots. But we've had some really cold overnight lows and he's had some buds. He's probably not going to have any apricots, right?

Jeff Edwards: His apricot production this year will be much less spectacular than last year. [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: The plant probably put so much energy into fruit production last year, that it may go into a little bit of a slump in production this year. I tend to relate it to women being pregnant. Usually there's a lull between the energy output from having one pregnancy to putting the energy into another pregnancy. And if a fruit tree really is heavy in production one year, usually [00:39:00] the next year is pretty low production. So one of the benefits of thinning the fruit from year to year to year is to get consistent production every year, rather than a real heavy load of production one year and little to none the next year or two.

Jerry Erschabeck: So on apple trees, don't they usually say that you get a bumper crop every three years?

Donna Hoffman: That's probably the case. I think that if you thin the fruit on that bumper crop year, that you can get more in the second and third year.

Jeff Edwards: Which is really hard to do. It's very difficult for people [OVERLAPPING] to thin fruit.

Donna Hoffman: It seems counter-productive, and-

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -and yeah. It's just difficult to do when you know that there's gonna be an apple there this year, and who knows what's gonna happen with the tree for next year. But if you want consistent production so that you know that you have a certain amount of fruit from that tree every year, it's best to remove some of that fruit.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, Jerry, my mother's apricot tree last year was just absolutely loaded and we would go and pick five-gallon buckets of apricots just in about 20 minutes. It was pretty crazy. And she's already mentioned that the blossoms had started to crack open. And so with the weather the last couple of weeks, I'm guessing most of those are done so she probably will not have the apricot production that she had.

The other thing that I've noticed is we have strawberries in our high tunnel. And, of course, they started blooming about three weeks ago, which is really odd, right? And because of the weather that we've had I've noticed black hearts in them, which means that those flowers have aborted. They frosted and they've aborted. I've taken some pictures of them and I can share them later on, but it just looks like a normal flower but the center is black, [OVERLAPPING] so they will abort and not produce fruit.

Donna Hoffman: They know better.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: Or one of those lines.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] So Jerry, do you have big plans this year for garden?

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, we do, and I've mentioned last week that I have a lawn care gentleman that is cleaning up lawns, and he's so graciously came and dumped his dried grass onto my garden. And I had- I've had some leaves and that sort of thing so I'm trying to be incorporating some more fiber and some more hummus. Not hummus.

Donna Hoffman: Humus.

Jeff Edwards: Humus.

Jerry Erschabeck: Humus. Ryan, can you take care of that for us? Thank you. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Humus is an edible garbanzo bean product.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, and it's really good with olive oil and that sort of thing, a little spice.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: [00:42:00] But I've really tried incorporating some more humus into my soils and that sort of thing. I've changed our sitting area. We had a canvas 10 by 10 sitting area...with the metal ones, you know.

Jeff Edwards: Gazebo.

Donna Hoffman: Gazebo?

Jerry Erschabeck: Gazebo, kind of thing, and we've moved that, and so now I'm going to plant my pumpkin where that soil has not been, it's been in fallow. And so now I'm hoping that that will help out. But I did notice that that's also where my tree had iron deficiency, iron-

Jeff Edwards: Chlorosis.

Jerry Erschabeck: Cirrhosis?

Jeff Edwards: Chlorosis.

Donna Hoffman: Chlorosis.

Jerry Erschabeck: Chlorosis. Iron cho- chlorosis. And so I'll have to incorporate a little more iron in that area. But yeah, we have two raised beds. They're four by eight by about three foot high. And so we always like to put really good soil in there, and so we've bought some soil and we're gonna put our, I think our salad mix in there and that sort of thing.

Jeff Edwards: So four by eight and three foot high, are they soil all the way through or do you have fill in the bottom of them so you didn't have to bring as much soil in for that?

Jerry Erschabeck: We used newspaper to fill, and so we used bundles of newspaper on that bottom and so we are hoping that it incorporate some worms to come up through. We put a heavy wire mesh cloth underneath it to keep out the moles and voles because we have a little of both.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabeck: And so hopefully, the worms will find sanctuary in there and do that sort of thing. But I mentioned to my nephew that we need to have a worm farm.

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Jerry Erschabeck: Uh, we're always thinking of business opportunities, right? So we're thinking maybe we should do a worm farm. Have you ever done anything like that?

Jeff Edwards: So when I was a kid- [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: -one of my entrepreneurial activities was to raise worms and sell them for, uh, fish bait. Um, but I only did it in a little tiny bucket and it worked fairly well, and I made a buck or two and it was okay. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: So worm casting fertilizers is supposed to be one of those really exceptional fertilizers, along with chicken manure. But, you know, you need kind of a bigger space and bigger opportunity. But I don't know much about it.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: So I have a Master Gardener in Casper who comes in every year when we teach the soils lessons to the Master Gardeners. She's also taught at a couple of our spring conferences. [00:45:00] But she does vermicomposting. She's done it kind of under the kitchen sink or in a bin in her garage or her basement for years. But when her father was still living and she lived on a real piece of property, she actually vermicomposted on a commercial basis and she turned her compost with a little tractor. So if you really want to get into it, I have a resource for you. But she does a program with each class of my Master Gardener trainees, and we always do a drawing at that class, and she gives away the worm farm that she builds while we're doing class.

Jeff Edwards: Jerry, you need participate in that, man.

Jerry Erschabeck: I would like to, I'd like to be notified or-

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: -somehow.

Donna Hoffman: We can work that out.

Jerry Erschabeck: Good deal.

Donna Hoffman: After all of us have started doing our educational programming via Zoom-

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -I may be able to branch out. You want to join the Natrona County Master Gardeners next year?

Jerry Erschabeck: Uh, I've not joined the Goshen County Master Gardeners. Maybe I should do them first.

Donna Hoffman: Oh, okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: I've done this gardening by, uh, Hooke 'n Crooke, by mistake, and success. Uh, I was taught by my mom and my dad. So I kind of- no, I don't think so.

Donna Hoffman: Oh, okay. All right.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] You're too old learn new stuff, is that what you're saying, Jerry?

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, no. I'm learning new stuff all the time. I'm on this Zoom program for Gosh sakes.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: So my parents came to one of the spring conferences. I think actually it was my mother that was here, and she went home and told my dad about it. And they've lived in town for quite a while. Since then they've gotten back into ranching because we did when I was kid. But anyway, mom went home and told dad about it and she wanted him to build some tubs for worm composting because she's always been really good about composting and using kitchen scraps and things. And this was gonna be a more concerted effort and a cleaner way to do it, so they got into worm composting in a Rubbermaid tub in their basement. Dad got to the point that he had three Rubbermaid tubs in his basement, and he would have company over and he'd say, "Hey, you wanna come downstairs, I've got 10,000 head of livestock in the basement."

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER].

Donna Hoffman: So then, mom got fruit flies in the kitchen and she decided it was because of the worm farm in the basement that she had fruit flies in the kitchen, so dad had to get rid of his livestock in the basement. But they've gotten back into it.

Jeff Edwards: So, you know, vermicomposting is kind of like sourdough, right? You got to feed it. You got to take care of it. You got to take them out every once in awhile and use them. But so, you know, it's same type of activity. [NOISE]

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. I know enough Master Gardeners that have worms that if you want a [00:48:00] dozen worms to get started, I can get you started.

Jeff Edwards: So- [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: So I was thinking that maybe of an old bathtub and put it into your garden, so it would be a container but I don't know if it would be too cold.

Donna Hoffman: The only problem with that is the red wigglers are the best vermicomposting worms according to Lynn, and they are not cold-hardy.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, so it has to be inside.

Donna Hoffman: You can do them seasonally, but then you have to bring some of them in so that you have some leftover for next year.

Jerry Erschabeck: Like the sourdough bread.

Donna Hoffman: Use it in the winter months indoors which, of course, is a much longer season than our 110-day growing season.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: You bet.

Jeff Edwards: So Jerry, we've talked before about different things that we're planting. Have you ever planted bush bean, uh, no-

Donna Hoffman: Pole beans?

Jeff Edwards: Pole beans, yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: We have as a matter of fact. And I built a fence, a trellis, to put up. And my first one was 15 feet high and my wife kind of got excited about that, because she says, "What are you trying to do, kill me?"

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: And so if you're harvesting on something, my advice would be to build something only maybe eight feet tall. And so, eight feet tall would be very, very well received. Uh, you just build it out of two by fours and put it up in the air and support it. So that the wind- once you have that growth on there, it becomes a sail, and so you really have to support that so it won't fall over.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. So I might have to rethink my strategy on pole beans. [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: So I think one of my Master Gardeners sends me messages quite frequently with his plans for gardening, and his plant addiction images, and things like that. He did send me a meme the other day that there was one plant in the corner of the house before seclusion started, and then the picture of after seclusion stops, and there's like 60 plants in the corner.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: So he's still very open to ordering plants online, even though he's not going out shopping very much.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER]

Donna Hoffman: But he and I may have watched the same vertical gardening video, because last weekend his mother-in-law, he's also a Master Gardener, she and I were at a same event where we did not get out of our cars, but we visited across the parking lot. Anyway, um, they were headed later on to pick up some hog panels from one of the ag supply places here in town, and use them to bridge over from one raised bed to the other raised bed for vertical gardening.

Jerry Erschabeck: Uh-huh.

Donna Hoffman: And it [00:51:00] creates quite a lovely arbor over the [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -pathway between the two raised beds. And Mark and I also have four-by-eight raised beds. Ours are a little bit staggered in the yard because I'm trying to create a semicircular pattern in the yard. So they overlap by four feet. I'm planning to use some hog panels to create some vertical gardening. And the video I watched is beautiful with a squash or a pumpkin growing over it, and the fruit, the cucumbers hang down and are really easy to harvest cause they're right there at waist, hip, shoulder height to harvest.

Jerry Erschabeck: Sure.

Donna Hoffman: She had some beautiful, really long runner beans on a pole as well, and those had like foot-long bean pods on them. So [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Aren't the hog [OVERLAPPING]

Donna Hoffman: -was very attractive and created some shaded pathways that the fruits hanging on, and it also helped create some shaded areas in the raised beds where the one plant is creating shade for the next raised bed. So I'm-

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Donna Hoffman: -I'm thinking those are gonna be some fun things to try this summer.

Jeff Edwards: Aren't the hog panels 20 feet long?

Donna Hoffman: Sixteen.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, 16.

Donna Hoffman: So they create an eight-foot arch.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, yeah, perfect.

Donna Hoffman: But the one issue I'm seeing is I've got four foot of overlap, but I understand the panels are 50 inches long. So I'm gonna have to cut a notch out of one of them because it's gonna hit the corner of the raised bed, because they're four-foot overlap, not two inches extra.

Jerry Erschabeck: Bolt cutters work really well in those things.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah. So I'm probably gonna end up cutting like one row off of the hog panels.

Jerry Erschabeck: Sure.

Donna Hoffman: -or the method that the gal in the video used is, she put a T-post and tied the hog panel to the T-post and that gave her like a one-foot or an 18-inch gap from the top of the raised bed to where the panel, the trellising, actually started, which gave her a little bit more height. But like Jerry, I've put a hardware cloth in the bottom of my raised bed so that we don't get rodents up in the raised bed. So I can't put a T-post in the raised bed, they'd have to be outside the raised beds. So-

Jerry Erschabeck: Okay.

Donna Hoffman: -I have a little bit of engineering to do before-

Jerry Erschabeck: Sure.

Donna Hoffman: -uh, I come up with my end solution.

Jeff Edwards: It will help. [OVERLAPPING] It will all work out.

Jerry Erschabeck: We used the hog panel for our tomatoes and weaved them in and out of the-

Donna Hoffman: Uh-huh.

Jerry Erschabeck: -of the hog panel as supports for our tomatoes.

Donna Hoffman: Um, yep.

Jerry Erschabeck: My uncle used the hog panels to grow cucumbers.

Donna Hoffman: Yep.

Jerry Erschabeck: And, man, they did really well. They'd usually migrate towards the back side, and he would just go in behind and [00:54:00] pick those cucumbers off, and they've really done well.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah, yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Instead of making a hoop out of the hog panels, I just use them vertically to-

Donna Hoffman: Right.

Jeff Edwards: -trellis my cucumbers on and they, you know, on the side and they do great.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Works great.

Donna Hoffman: I've seen yours and that's kinda why I started thinking along those lines, and then I saw this vertical garden panel and I went, "Huh, I could have an arch?" hmm, so-

Jeff Edwards: And they're people who actually use those hog panels and tie them together and make themselves hoop houses out of them.

Donna Hoffman: [inaudible 00:54:30] , yeah.

Jeff Edwards: They'll tie them together, make sure that there aren't any pokey bits hanging out of them and then they'll cover them with a greenhouse cover and have their own hoop house made out of that. And usually they're strong enough that if the snow comes, it'll crush them a little bit, but then as soon as the snow melts, they'll pop back up to-

Donna Hoffman: Okay. Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: -their normal size, yeah.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Yep.

Donna Hoffman: So we're getting close on time, but Jeff, I had asked you last week for some advice on what to do with a greenhouse structure that Mark and I are rehabbing.

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Donna Hoffman: We went to lumber store on Saturday and worked a little bit, but the weather was not so great for finishing our project. But Mark's been out every day after work this week, so far, and has almost got the lumber attached to the side so-

Jeff Edwards: Oh, perfect.

Donna Hoffman: -we're doing the purlins you were talking about. We had a long discussion about whether the wood should go on the inside or on the outside. He went out on the lower sidewall, [LAUGHTER] and I think we're gonna go on the outside, on the upper portion, but there's big discussions about whether that's gonna be wear spot or if it should go on the inside instead of the outside.

Jeff Edwards: Well send me an updated picture.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Jerry Erschbeck: Donna, we have that same sort of discussionary panel at our house on a particular number of things. And so sometimes you just wait for another summer and you go, "Don't you remember we tried it your way, [LAUGHTER] and it didn't work out?" or we both agree that by Golly, that doesn't work out so good.

Donna Hoffman: Yeah, yeah.

Jeff Edwards: A little time usually fixes all arguments.

Donna Hoffman: [inaudible 00:56:21]

Jeff Edwards: Excuse me, uh, discussions, right?

Donna Hoffman: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: So Jerry, we are just about out of time. Is there anything that you would like to summarize or point out or-

Jerry Erschabeck: Yes, I would. Uh, now, the Master Gardeners are giving away giant pumpkin seeds and will be available at the University of Wyoming Extension office, west of Torrington. So-

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: -we're trying to get out the message that giant pumpkins and the contest, we're still hopeful that that's a go, but, you know, you have to have a pumpkin in order [00:57:00] to try to do a weigh off. And so we're giving out the post pumpkins seeds. Um, and you can call ahead. They'll probably go ahead and come out to the parking lot and just give them to you so you don't have to come in, but I would call ahead and say, "Hey, I'm in the parking lot. I'm here for my pumpkin seeds."

Jeff Edwards: Or they'll put them in the mailbox that's out by the front door.

Jerry Erschabeck: Or- yeah. There's multiple ways to do that. So if you're gonna start a pumpkin, May 1st is generally what's thinking about, how to do that. And when you do start it maybe cut your container in half, at least, and then tape it back up so that when you have that pumpkin growing, the transplant process is as minimally evasive to the roots as possible. So then you just cut your container. You'd probably be- put your container in, and maybe even cut the bottom out or make a lip on that bottom so you can just slide it out easy enough. So transplanting is the major thing that you really wanna be the most careful with.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. All right.

Jerry Erschabeck: But you have to have a seed.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: You have to have some seeds [inaudible 00:58:18] -in order to have a giant pumpkin.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. Now we know where to get them.

Donna Hoffman: I heard a tip on growing cucurbits the other day. And one of the tips was that you break a little, the tip off of the seed so that the seed coat, so that the root pops out of there a little bit easier.

Jerry Erschabeck: We call that scarfing and you actually use a nail file to go around the tip of the pumpkin seed, or the cucurbit which includes the squash, so that you have a tendency to go to a white rind. You can see the inner workings of the seed as you file away the outside of that seed, and it just makes germination so much easier.

Donna Hoffman: Okay.

Jerry Erschabeck: So when the seed-

Jeff Edwards: Less stressful on the plant.

Jerry Erschabeck: -so when the pumpkin- yeah. So when the plant actually comes up and out, a lot of times you'll see that seed hanging onto the first cotyledons, and [OVERLAPPING] it's so much- and it's so much easier to get that seed coat off of there if you've scarfed the seed in the first place.

Jeff Edwards: Okay. All righty. Hey, I think this is gonna wrap up our program for the week. Donna, thank you for being our guest. It's good to see you. And Jerry, thank you once again for participating and, uh, we'll do this again for next week.

Jerry Erschabeck: Sounds great. And sooner or later, we're gonna be doing this weekly.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, yes. Very soon.

Jerry Erschabeck: All right. Thank you.

Narrator: You've been listening to Lawn and Garden with University of Wyoming Extension specialist Jeff Edwards and co-host Jerry Erschabeck. Presented by KGOS and KERM radio in Torrington [01:00:00] and by University of Wyoming Extension: growing people, knowledge, and communities. [MUSIC]