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**Female 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. This is Jeff Edwards. This is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program. In studio today I have Jerry Erschabeck. Good morning, Jerry.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Good Morning, Jeff. Good morning, Brian

**Jeff Edwards:** Good to see you. And also with us in studio is Brian Sebade. Good to have you. How are you today?

**Brian Sebade:** I'm doing well. Thank you. Good to hear from you both as well.

**Jeff Edwards:** Fantastic. Um, we are going to take a moment and listen to messages from our sponsors and we'll be back in a bit.

**Female Narrator:** [MUSIC] Looking for the best way to keep up with all the news from University of Wyoming Extension, the College of Agriculture and Wyoming Ag Experiment stations? The uwagnews.com website features real-time education, research, and extension events and feature stories from across the state. Bookmark uwagnews.com today and subscribe to our monthly email newsletter. uwagnews.com, growing people, knowledge, and communities.

**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.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay, we're back. This is the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program. With us again today we have **Brian Sebade** and always **Jerry Erschabeck** in the studio. And Brian, you are going to talk about season extension today or we're all going to talk about seasons and extension today.

**Brian Sebade:** Yes. I think we'll all talk about it. Definitely something that's on our minds. You know, especially right now, we're all trying to get outside and do some activities to get ourselves moving here in the spring. And I think this is one of those things that gives us a head start and can, you know, really jump forward for where we need to be for production of different types of crops, usually annual vegetables.

**Jeff Edwards:** So, I fortunately have the ability to plant in a hoop house or a high tunnel. Jerry does not, so Jerry is a little bit jealous of my production right now. Right, Jerry? [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** That I am. [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** All I have- [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** I think-

**Jerry Erschabeck:** All I have is some raised beds, and we're gonna talk about how I can protect my raised beds.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes, but I'm- at a point now where I am going to be enjoying a nice green [00:03:00] salad here in the next couple of days.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, good on you. Have a nice salad dressing. [LAUGHTER] Dress- [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** So Brian, where do you want to start? How do you get people involved with the season extension? We might not have a lot of space. How do they add days to their growing season? And that's kind of basically what we're trying to get at.

**Brian Sebade:** Right. Yeah, so I really like to start, Jeff, with thinking about timing. So you know, depending on where you're at in the state, depending on where you're at in Goshen County, you know, you really need to be thinking about, "When am I trying to avoid frost?" and, you know, "What point am I going to get these really damaging frosts?" I kinda go back to some research that you've done here in Laramie looking at different methods for keeping high tunnels warm. And really what we're looking at is once we've kind of reached that threshold of we don't need to worry about temperatures in the teens, but, you know, maybe we're in the upper 20s for nighttime lows. Now, where are we at with our region or where we live, to where we can really start utilizing season extension to its best? As you very well know, Jeff, last week here in Laramie we were 10 below. So even if you have a high tunnel, sometimes that can be really damaging. So, we need to really be thinking [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** Right.

**Brian Sebade:** -about that.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, even in Goshen County we've had two differ- separate occasions where it's been single digit temperatures overnight. And, of course, you know, you have to- if you have plants out, you have to protect them somehow in single digits, or 10 below or whatever the case might be. It's pretty darn hard on green living things [LAUGHTER].

**Brian Sebade:** Right. And, you know, I have some low tunnels in my backyard and I'm one of those backyard gardeners and I had some dandelions coming up, some quack grass, you know, that I'm always battling. That was starting to pop up, and I was just about to go out, and, you know, do a little herbicide action on those and we had that big freeze and that really knocked back those plants pretty hard.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. So you mentioned the low tunnel. Well, let's start this way. What are the different types of structures? I mean, when I was a kid and we had a garden and it would be cool weather, usually in the fall, we would grab blankets or sheets or those types of things and go out and cover the garden just to protect it a little bit longer in the fall, you know. Are- are those types of things that we can do early in the springtime, too?

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah, for sure. I grew up doing the same thing as well. Luckily, I think we've kinda made some advances or, you know, maybe just thought about things a little bit different, Jeff, so we can, you know, start using some of the materials that are pretty readily available to us, you know, things like PVC or different types of metals that can bend, but really looking at using some different types of plastic to help trap that heat in. Now, this might be plastic like we buy for putting underneath gravel, might be different types of plastic that come in [00:06:00] sheets that we can build different types of structures. But really, just something that protects that plant to make it a little bit more suitable for them to make it through those nighttime temperatures and continue with the proper growth that they need to. So yeah, we have a lot of different things that are out there.

**Jeff Edwards:** So there's a product that we use, it's called, uh, Agribon, I believe, and it's a spun, woven- I think it's probably a spun product. It doesn't allow water through; it's pretty much water repellent. But even now, our overnight temperatures right now are in the 30s. But usually in our house, temperature will deep lower than what is projected. So even now inside the high tunnel we are still covering our things that we have planted just to trap that heat that's in the soil and give them that little bit of a boost so that they aren't really set back by any weird, cold temperatures. And the other thing, you know- sorry, Jerry.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I was just gonna ask, you don't use any heaters or any kind of artificial heat in your high tunnel?

**Jeff Edwards:** I don't use any heat in mine. But, you know, Brian has been talking or has mentioned low tunnels. I would- and I don't know if you've done this or not, Brian, but have you put in like a light bulb to try to keep the temperature up overnight or is that just to asking for a slow smoldering fire in your garden overnight? [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah. No, that's a really good question. I haven't messed with it too much, Jeff. You know, there's different things out there on the Internet. Put in some Christmas lights, something to that nature to kinda help things get through the night. I haven't experimented with it a whole lot. There is information out there, but there's not a lot of, I guess, what I would call sound scientific research of, you know, really going through the process to test out what is good and what is not.

Really for what I'm trying to think about is trying to use the sun to the best that I can for my ability. So trapping that heat in there. Maybe I've got a plastic cover, but then maybe also I'm using a row cover or something else and other material, kind of a blanket for lack of better terms, but I also can use inside that. So for me, I've really experimented more with trying to use different layers-

**Jeff Edwards:** Right.

**Brian Sebade:** -to add insulation value. But yeah, there is stuff out there, and for some folks they do try and add lights. As you know, Jeff, I have a 10-month-old puppy so I'm not really willing to have a bunch of electricity out back there, [LAUGHTER] but for some folks, I'd say go for it.

**Jeff Edwards:** Or cats that like to chew on wires and that kind of thing, right?

**Brian Sebade:** Yes. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** So trapping heat, keeping heat in the system, that is kind of our goal with this season extension type of things. Do you look at, do you use soil temperature probes, anything like that when you're trying to figure out if, "Hey, you know, I've been trying to keep this area warm? Can I get away with planting anything?" Do you do anything like that?

**Brian Sebade:** I don't. I guess I'm kind of a numbers man, [00:09:00] so I really go back to historical, you numbers as when can I expect some of those damaging frosts. So, I go back to the Wyoming ag statistics bulletins from the USDA, but I really like to use those to gauge when I should or should not be planting. You know, some years I can get by with it and others I can't. To me, Jeff, you know, as you very well know, it's really challenging when we have a really nice, warm week, you know, things are in the 50s and 60s here and then two or three days later, we're 10 below.

So for me here in Laramie, that's where I try to go. We can always roll the dice and sometimes it works out well, and sometimes it doesn't.

**Jeff Edwards:** So Dianne was really interested in rolling the dice this year, and we actually planted in the high tunnel, of course, on the first day of spring. So way back in March, [LAUGHTER] We planted, uh, radishes, spinach, and it's a leafy green mix but it's a cole crop, so it's not traditional lettuces. Um, and believe it or not, we've been able to baby them and keep them going and, uh, still covering them at nighttime. This last weekend we purchased a lot of our normal transplants: tomatoes, peppers, other cole crops. And we were able to get them planted and we've been covering them this week so far and they're hanging out. No transplant shock, they're looking good. We're ready, man, we're ready for green stuff. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, even in the high tunnel, Jeff, do you use like a wall of water for your tomatoes?

**Jeff Edwards:** So in the past, we have. But the tomatoes are small enough now that all we are really doing is, I put the cage- We have what we call, uh, sailor caps which are very similar to a wall of water. They have a metal cage frame and then the bag or the water slips over the top and the whole thing. But we only had two bags so we didn't think that we should try to select two tomatoes to survive. [LAUGHTER] So we put the cages around them and then have just been covering them with this Agribon product and, you know, fortunately inside the high tunnel, the wind's not gonna blow it off so it works really well, and they've been doing just fine. But, you know, our temperatures this week have been in the 30s, maybe dipping into the upper 20s and so a layer- so you've technically got two layers of material over the top of them and they should do just fine. Now, if they got to be 10 below, I don't think they'd be there. [LAUGHTER] Unless you could lay them down and then just cover them up and keep them nice and toasty. Jerry, have you ever experimented with covering things, planting really early?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Not so much. I've always just been one of those kinda guys that look at May 21st [00:12:00] is the average frost date and maybe try to do 10 days prior to that. I tried planting some canna bulbs way, way early last year. It didn't seem to work out so well for me. So my season extending has been more on the fall and doing the covering of sheets, blankets, plastics, and that sort of thing.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. So Brian, you mentioned low tunnels. Can you describe what low tunnels are?

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah. So basically, it's a miniature version of a high tunnel. So we have PVC, we've got a wood frame. So essentially, it is a raised bed but it's usually just a two- I make it out of a two-by-six, so it's a raised bed at five-and-a-half inches. I just do a rectangle usually. The easy thing for me is to buy three two-by-sixes. So I buy three that are eight foot and then cut one in half so it's four-by-eight. Then I buy three pieces of PVC that are 10 foot, uh [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** What diameter of PVC and what schedule?

**Brian Sebade:** I do three-quarter inch and I do schedule 40, and then I just bend those over. I attach them in each corner and on the sides, the one in the middle, to that frame with one screw and then I end up putting in the center, so it's gonna go up over the top, you know, if you think about the arch. I do a two-by-four that goes up on each side and then one that goes across the top, and then I attach those ribs to that top board. So essentially, you know, if you think about the McDonald's arch, that arch I have a board going vertical to the top apex of that arch and then one that goes all the way across so they all can tie together. And then I usually just put some plastic over the top, either four mil or six mil, that's clear plastic. I secure it so it doesn't move on one side and then I leave it loose on the front, so that way I can open and close it as needed. And obviously, here in Laramie and other places, there tends to be wind so I get that extra benefit. You know, sometimes I'll add jugs of water to help retain some heat. Again I'll put maybe some of the row covers over the top of it to add some extra heat. [OVERLAPPING] So that gives us an extra start.

**Jeff Edwards:** Since I am interrupting, the jugs of water, so you're talking about plastic milk containers that you've filled with water. Your hope is that during the daytime, the heat will be collected in that water and then that will stabilize the temperature on the inside of that structure?

**Brian Sebade:** Right. Yep. So essentially, it's kind of like walls of water, just kind of helping out a little bit. So that's something, you know, when I'm done, I can just go recycle those milk jugs anyways but during the spring, I can keep them in there for a while to help things move along a little bit.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. All right.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So Brian, it sounds like- my raised beds are four-by-eight as well. So it sounds like I could use that three quarter inch schedule 40 PVC. Will I buy those in 10 foot for the hoop or would I buy those in just eight foot?

**Brian Sebade:** Um, 10 foot. And I actually have the designs that are on barnyardsandbackyards.com, [00:15:00] so you can go there under Gardening, Season Extension, and I've got an article listed there on what you need and the directions for doing it. So you can go back and fact check me now, Jerry, and see in fact, I probably did say eight feet instead of 10 but the directions are right there.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** You know what, Brian, I think I've watched that. That is a very nice little program video about how to do that, but I was just wondering about how to do it for mine. And so yeah, I don't know if you said eight or 10. Either way, you know, experience is probably really our big pusher.

**Jeff Edwards:** Brian, how do you attach the plastic on the one side?

**Brian Sebade:** I'm cheap, so I either use scraps. I'll buy pickets for cedar fence and I'll usually rip those down to about an inch width, maybe an inch and a half. And then I'll just use some like one-inch screws or something real small and I'll attach it that way. And then on the front, I like to put in some channel and then wiggle wire, essentially that can help secure it. So basically, we have like a C-channel and then we have this curvy wire that fits into that C-channel that secures the plastic. I don't know that I can describe it better here on the radio but if you Google wiggle wire it's easy to find.

**Jeff Edwards:** And- and it's usually available at greenhouse supply places. It not usually available local.

**Brian Sebade:** Right.

**Jeff Edwards:** Greenhouse Megastore, FarmTek, those kind of places would probably have it, I think.

**Brian Sebade:** Right.

**Jeff Edwards:** It an interesting product that, um, if when it's cold and your hands are cold, it can be kind of a challenge to work that wire back into the channel in order to [LAUGHTER] get it all held down. But, uh, [OVERLAPPING] it does work out okay.

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah, and you can buy two types of wire. As you know, Jeff, there's some that are just, you know, regular metal and you can also buy some with the PVC coating on them.

**Jeff Edwards:** Right.

**Brian Sebade:** And I really like the ones with the coating. To me it's easier on my hands. It's- I just like working with all. [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, and it seems to slide into the channel a whole lot better than [OVERLAPPING] the straight wire which is- the straight wire is, I believe, it's a stainless steel product so it's very springy. [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** Right.

**Jeff Edwards:** It can be very stiff to work with. [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** Right, right. Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** All right. You know, low tunnels and then we have, just having things available to- if you're a container gardener or if you are gardening on a small scale but don't really want to make a big investment in things. If you do cover your garden or your containers because you're anxious to have some green stuff going, you probably need to put something in the center. Not very tall but a little bit taller than the crop that's growing just to hold that material off the plant. And this might be what you

guys have experienced but to me, straight plastic or [00:18:00] plastic tarp is probably the least desirable of things to cover, particularly if it touches the plants because if it freezes, well, and also there's condensation that will build up on the inside of that and then that may freeze and then if it's touching the plants, it will definitely freeze the plant. So something that breathes is probably going to be a little bit better and if you can lift it up off the plants it's even better for their survival. Makes a little tent, makes a little air pocket, keeps them going. I don't know if- [OVERLAPPING]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I put plastic- I put plastic over the top of my pumpkin plants early on. And the leaf canopy is high enough that you're just zinging the leaves without killing the plants. So sometimes, you can put something under there to support your plastic, and sometimes- I didn't do that with my pumpkins. I should protect each and every one of those leaves because they all provide nutrient.

**Jeff Edwards:** You should, Jerry, because every time those leaves get zinged, you're setting back that pumpkin. You're probably losing a pound for every leaf that you have wounded. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** More- more than likely. [LAUGHTER] On that last freeze that we had, it was so hard it even zinging the tulips, the iris, and those are two tough critters, and so covering those was probably a better idea. We didn't get to that.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. And you know, Wyoming is a challenging environment. The wind blows a lot here, right? So part of covering things, you also have to anchor your cover somehow, either with- a lot of times we'll use two-by-fours if we're covering things outside or cement blocks, or those types of things. So try to keep things from blowing away, which usually what happens is the wind blows during the night and then it freezes, then the temperature drops. [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** Right. Yeah. Then you're- yeah, really [inaudible 00:19:58] .

**Jeff Edwards:** So you've blown off your cover and then you're done?

**Brian Sebade:** Exactly. Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** But I would agree with you, Brian. Laramie is one of the hardest climates I've ever seen to grow most anything. What I was successful at was rhubarb and sunflowers, that's it.

**Jeff Edwards:** And horseradish. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** No, the horseradish is in Goshen County.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh, okay. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** And it's growing well. It even survived the tilling.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** We tilled right over the top of it.

**Jeff Edwards:** Wait a minute. Was last weekend recreational rototilling?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, it wasn't recreational. That was my first tiling.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh, okay.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I tilled under- my nephew and I tilled under leaves, grass clippings, raked all the edges in and that sort of thing. And now, I think this weekend we're setting our pig paneling and just putting it in place for our tomatoes and any of the binding crop that we choose to use on a vertical structure.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. Brian, you did hear him say, "My first tilling," right? [00:21:00] [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** I did, yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Caitlin would be so upset with him. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So my idea on this is set everything in place, wait a little while until my first crop of weeds come up and then till it again. And then that's- actually, I didn't do a fall tiling aka, according to Caitlin, and so I just kinda let it set and that sort of thing and put leaves and the grass clippings and all that stuff on it. But yeah, in the early season, early part of the gardening process for me, I like to till once, let it sit for a while, maybe even put some water on it, and then go ahead and let the weeds germinate, and then till again. And then it's all hand weeding.

**Jeff Edwards:** So you're using that as a mechanical weed control?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Absolutely.

**Jeff Edwards:** Excellent. Okay. I guess it's justifiable then.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, [LAUGHTER] I haven't done any recreational rototilling now for a while. It's all been dedicated. [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** I'll just sit here and smile and nod, Jerry.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** [LAUGHTER] Okay. How do you feel about tilling, Brian?

**Jeff Edwards:** I don't think Brian owns a rototiller.

**Brian Sebade:** I do not own a rototiller.

**Jeff Edwards:** Although a 10-month-old puppy might be rototilling.

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah, that's true. Yes, she does do that from time to time. So yeah, you know, I think in the right place, it can always be useful. There's a lot of different ways to manage weeds, whether it's in a covered setting, you know, whether a high tunnel, low tunnel. But figuring out what works best for you is really important so I think it is good to touch on that for sure.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Now, I know you've done articles on keeping weeds out of your garden and different techniques. Do you like to do solarization? Do you like to do a cover crop in amongst your garden as well? What do you like to do?

**Brian Sebade:** For me, I try to use as many different things as I can. So if we start in the fall, for example, once everything has been harvested, try to pull up weeds that are there. Again, it's not a big area so it takes an afternoon, I can get most everything done. Then I usually like to put some sort of mulch cover over. So usually, leaves and grass clippings that I've kept from the lawn, I put that over the top. I don't use any pesticide, fertilizer combinations or herbicide fertilizer combination so I don't have to worry about residual that way. I leave that over the winter. It kinda keeps things covered, a little bit warmer. Then I'll usually pull that off. I'll try to get any other weeds I can then in the spring, and again pull them if I need to. And then the other thing I really like to do is, once I kinda have a good handle on things in the spring for my low tunnels, I really like to plant densely to make sure I don't leave a lot of room or a lot of resources for weeds to come in. If I do have open areas or bare ground in there then I usually like to use grass clippings to kind of help with water retention in the soil and then to help suppress weeds that way. So if I'm going to use an herbicide, it's usually very early in the spring or in the fall, and it's usually something without any residual, so [00:24:00] just glyphosate for example. So that way, I know I don't have to worry about anything in that soil for when I go to plant seeds. So that's kinda my quick, down and dirty of taking care of weeds.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I have a very specific problem now in our flower bed, grape hyacinths, and they come up- [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** That's a problem?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yes, because they're taking it over, as well as chives. So I was wanting to kinda run this past you. Yeah, chives just grow like crazy and the grape hyacinths, they're overrunning everything. So I was wondering, glyphosate and paint those, use a little just, uh, a glyphosate in a little paint can and then paint them.

**Brian Sebade:** [OVERLAPPING] Well you can, but there's a new thing out from Roundup. They actually make it now in a gel that's just like a stick of deodorant. So you can go buy a stick of Roundup and you can use it that way, if you'd like. That way, you don't actually have to worry about it being a liquid.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** So don't confuse it with your deodorant, but it looks just like a stick of deodorant. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, fortunately, there'd be no weeds growing, right?

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER] We would hope. [LAUGHTER] Hey, um, I think yep, I think it's time to take a break. So we'll, uh, take a few minutes and listen to our sponsors and we'll be back in a moment.

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**Jeff Edwards:** Okay, we're back. This is **Jeff Edwards**. This the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program with **Jerry Erschabeck**. And along with us today is **Brian Sebade**. He is University of Wyoming Extension Educator located in Laramie, Wyoming. And we've been talking about season extension techniques, low tunnels and high tunnels, and keeping things warm, and growing a garden, and just thinking green, I guess, is how we should talk about it today. Brian, have you actually planted or you're going to hold off a little bit? Have you planted anything?

**Brian Sebade:** Well, can I answer that as a yes and a no?

**Jeff Edwards:** Sure.

**Brian Sebade:** [OVERLAPPING] Okay.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Brian Sebade:** So I have not planted in the low tunnels yet. I have planted inside. But what I've also done in my backyard is, I took an old interior door, it was painted white, and I just set it on its edge. So instead of being vertical it's horizontal. I propped it up and I left the hinges on it. And so what I did is then [00:27:00] I went and bought some polycarbonate sheets, and essentially, I just made a grow box. So I've got it rigged up. I drilled the hole in the side so it's hooked up to my irrigation. And so in that grow box, I've got a bunch of jugs of water again. So the sheets are on top, they're also on the sides. And so essentially with that, I help trap a bunch of heat. And so currently inside my house, I've set up some LED lights and I've got some big containers, you know, like you'd grow big flowers in. So I've got



some bean plants, some carrots, some beets, lettuce, you know, all those sorts of plants. I've tried to stick with a lot of the cool season plants [OVERLAPPING].

**Jeff Edwards:** Wait a minute. Wait. Time-out.

**Brian Sebade:** Yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Carrots. Do you transplant carrots?

**Brian Sebade:** No. So what I'm gonna- hear me out.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Brian Sebade:** So I've got [LAUGHTER] big containers. So I'm gonna take these containers, and then I put those containers into that grow box. And then essentially, I can do some container gardening within a little structure. So I'll keep them in that for a month or so. And then later on the summer, I'll pull them out and I've, you know, have had plants that I can use that way. And then within that grow box, I can plant later in the summer and get a fall crop of lettuce, and I can even still get another harvest of beans and other things like that, beets as well.

**Jeff Edwards:** Because it can freeze at any time in Laramie, right?

**Brian Sebade:** It can freeze at any time. Yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** So I really enjoyed using that. We have quite a few folks that have put those up against houses and protected areas. They seem to do really well for getting plants to grow and stay warm throughout the growing season.

**Jeff Edwards:** So maybe with something with a Southern exposure that might be protected from the prevailing wind, say, from the North or from the West, or whichever direction it comes from you? Okay.

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah. Uh, and once I've moved the containers out – I like low stature plants for that reason – it's protected from the wind. I can crack the top open super easy. It's much easier than, you know, opening a low tunnel. And it's South facing, so it warms up really nice, and it's just another thing that I can get a lot of extra days out of.

**Jeff Edwards:** Could you did the same thing with straw bales instead of the door?

**Brian Sebade:** Yep.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Brian Sebade:** Use straw bales, I mean, you can do whatever you want. The main thing is, you need to think about light. So what I've noticed with mine is it tends to collect a lot more dirt, a lot of other things that blow on top of it. So I've had more issues getting enough light to plants than, say, a low tunnel or a high tunnel or something like that.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Brian Sebade:** So that's been my one issue I've had to think about. And that's why I tried to start, uh, a little bit later. So that way I can open that top and they get plenty of light during the warm part of the day.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. The reason that I jumped on the carrot thing is, last week we did a program, uh, different environment, where we were talking about transplanting sweet corn. And the individual who

was on our program said, "Yes, I transplant sweet corn." And I had not heard of that until we lived [00:30:00] in Iowa. And the folks there, there are some very serious individuals about growing sweet corn there. And [LAUGHTER] they do start their sweet corn early and transplant it. And it's their goal to have sweet corn by the 4th of July every year. So for somebody to do it here, we don't really think of that very often but heard of- I think her sweet corn was already up four inches or something like that. And about the 15th of May she'll take it out and transplanted it. Uh, she said she transplants it with a fork. She scoops it out of the little cell that she has because it is difficult to transplant, right? But it can be done. A lot of things can be started inside and transplanted outside.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So I'm wondering, Jeff, how many ears of corn or how many corn plants you'd have to have for like good pollination for that crop?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. So Jerry, last year we grew sweet corn in the high tunnel, which was the first year and you think, "Well, why would you do that? We have such good growing conditions in Goshen County." But again, it's- if you get that crop going earlier, you can get sweet corn sooner than August, right? So, um, I believe last year, we probably had 20 plants in two different rows that were right next to each other. And it was sufficient, all the ears filled. And that was inside the high tunnel without any insects pollinating them. So, you know, if you have a- when corn pollinates, it basically just kinda drops out of the sky and filters down to where the silks are and pollinates each one of those granules. So it just kind of- you could have an individual corn plant, and it would pollinate itself.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, I'll be darned.

**Jeff Edwards:** Did I misspeak, Brian? I think that's correct. I've seen volunteer corn plants along the side of the road that have ears on them and they're the only ones standing there. [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** We'll just go with it. Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. Okay. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** So I think, uh, in most places planting has started. So hopefully it's a good season for everybody, given the current conditions gives them something to do. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, yeah. And on that note, since we're all- we've all been kinda indoors, kind of a nice thing to think about is we're all unconditioned. So get out there and do it slow. Bend with your knees.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Lift with your knees.

**Jeff Edwards:** That's correct.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Use a wide stance [OVERLAPPING] and not your back. Use a wide stance when you're hoeing or raking. Stay hydrated. But take it nice and slow because we're all unconditioned.

**Jeff Edwards:** Uh, and wear sunscreen.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, yeah, and sunscreen is a great thing.

**Jeff Edwards:** Protect yourself with sunscreen. I've already gotten my dose of UV radiation this year. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Are you wearing a little badge?

**Jeff Edwards:** Uh, uh, no. Well, it's already peeled off, so it's okay, I guess.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** [00:33:00] There you go.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER] All right. Anything else you'd like to cover today, Brian, with gardening, planting, uh, anything else on your mind?

**Brian Sebade:** Well, you know, the last thing I want to touch on and one thing I've started doing the past couple of years. So I talked about carrots, and I kinda mixed it in with a bunch of different plants. With carrots, it takes a while for them to germinate, it's a few weeks for sure. They like a moist environment. So one thing I've started doing when I've got my containers, whether I'm gonna transfer them directly outside. You know, just take those pots outside or put them in a covered box, is I've been putting Saran wrap over the top of those containers and then a big rubber band, just to help retain the moisture, keeps a little bit warmer. Again, kinda go on the season extension thing even to the indoors. I really enjoy doing that because it helps get things going a lot faster.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that. I worked with a horticulturist for awhile and he would always say, "Plant your carrot crop and then cover it with a board to try to retain that moisture and get those seeds to germinate." I think carrots can take 21 days before they even start showing up. It just kinda depends on the soil temperature. And so what we've adopted is laying a sheet of plastic right over the top of the rows that we've planted in order to retain that moisture. And, you know, if they don't dry out, they're gonna germinate. They're gonna show up eventually, and you should have pretty good carrot crop.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So parsnips would be the same thing?

**Jeff Edwards:** I think any small-seeded crop, you can do them the same way, yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Mm-hmm.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah. I agree.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I really like the idea about putting Saran wrap on it because you will condensate and keep that moisture in. And anytime you put the water on and the rubber band, you can take it off and on anytime you want.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Do you get anxious, Brian, and dig under the soil to see if the carrots have germinated?

**Brian Sebade:** Um, I do not. But for as patient as I am, you should not have put that in my mind, Jerry. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Now, it's there.

**Brian Sebade:** Now, it's there.

**Jeff Edwards:** So you're gonna be sacrificing plants. "Are you germinated yet?"

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah, and I can let Jerry know, yeah. They'd [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I've been doing that with some castor beans, and gee, it seems like it's taken a long time for anything to happen, other than the bean swelling up itself. And so now I've got just a little green coming out of my castor bean, but it took a long time.

**Jeff Edwards:** So did you plant it in soil or did you put them in a moist paper towel?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I planted it in a soil container along with my elephant ear plant. Yeah.

So Jeff, do you plant your garlic inside or outside of your high tunnel?

**Jeff Edwards:** Outside.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Outside.

**Jeff Edwards:** So we do not- we probably shut everything down in our garden by November. And we typically we'll plant our [00:36:00] garlic in October. But then things in the high tunnel don't get regular water because it's covered. And then in the wintertime, we're kinda like, "Eh, we'll get to it later." [LAUGHTER] So outside it seems to do better. It has all the natural moisture that it can collect, and it's up. I think our garlic is probably four inches tall right now.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh my.

**Jeff Edwards:** So, uh, um. [OVERLAPPING]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** And you plant that in October?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I plant mine in the last of August, and mine are only up about two and-a-half, three inches.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Interesting. Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. Okay! [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** You know what? Gardening is one of those things that, what I do might not work for you. And you as an individual, you have to figure out what works best for you. And you have to be the one to make those mistakes along the way and go, "Oh, well, that didn't work."

**Jerry Erschabeck:** That didn't work.

**Jeff Edwards:** And start something or try it again, do it a little bit differently. And again, usually there's not- fortunately, there's usually not a lot of financial investment in gardening to get things started, so you can make those mistakes and start over or try something different and chalk it up to learning, and move on, right? That's kinda my attitude.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Mine as well. And that's why I've never really been one to go into Master Gardening. Master Gardening is a great course, exposes you to a lot of stuff, but I'm more of the, "Let's try and see if it works." And [LAUGHTER] if you put too much fertilizer on it, by golly, it burns the crap out of stuff. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes, it does.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** But with giant pumpkins, you know, you have a tendency to try to put a little more fertilizer on than you would normally put on anything else. And so yeah, just one of those days.

**Jeff Edwards:** You just kinda think everything should be treated like a giant pumpkin, Jerry, and then everything will be okay.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** You know, not so much, but [LAUGHTER] I think if you wanted world peace, you'd give everybody a giant pumpkin seed and say, "Hey, grow this and see what happens."

**Jeff Edwards:** No. I don't think that it would contribute to world peace. I think you'd have so much competition that everybody had been at each other's throats. [LAUGHTER] Brian, have you- [OVERLAPPING] Go ahead.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It'd be another way to feed the world there.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah [LAUGHTER]. Brian, have you grown a giant pumpkin or participated in that type of competition?

**Brian Sebade:** I have not. In Laramie, if you get your winter squash plants to grow, you are the champion. So-

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER]

**Brian Sebade:** -uh, that's what I stick with. So I just do winter squash so that I can, you know, keep throughout the winter. I have not tried the giant pumpkin in Laramie, but that should be my next challenge, I think.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** We used to grow. [OVERLAPPING]

**Brian Sebade:** -we have [00:39:00] had some gardeners actually do a couple of plants, then they've had fairly good success but not near what we'd seen in Goshen County and other places in Wyoming.

**Jeff Edwards:** You know, I think what you should start there, Brian, is the giant cabbage competition. Because I think you guys should-

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** -be able to grow pretty good sized cabbages.

**Brian Sebade:** Right, yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, so.

**Brian Sebade:** Next extension challenge, so there we go.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, that's right. The big cabbage challenge, and there are places in the United States do that.

**Brian Sebade:** Right.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Long ago and far away, we used to grow pumpkins to sell, and we would take a trailer full of them to Laramie and man, they were just, "Where did you get these?" And I said, "Goshen County, we grew them." "Oh, my God," and we would sell out like crazy. Actually, Jeff, it was the same trailer that you wound up with?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, uh, I understand that.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. [LAUGHTER] So we used to have a giant cabbage contest along with the giant pumpkin contest. And yeah, there were some 22, 25 pounders as a cole crop- cold weather crop, I think they would do well in Laramie.

**Jeff Edwards:** So one of my first county fair experiences as an adult, I took a cabbage to the Goshen County Fair, and I think I won a blue ribbon in the mid '90s because I had such a very large cabbage, and it was huge. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** And they're fun to grow as well.

**Jeff Edwards:** And very easy, very easy to grow. So, um, what have you got going on, Brian, education-wise, program-wise that, you know, as we look forward, do you have things coming up that maybe people can participate in this year?

**Brian Sebade:** Right. Yeah, it's kind of a challenge this year. Yeah. One of the things, Jeff, is the Barnyards and Backyards Live. That's happening Wednesdays and Fridays, so we'll have those coming up. So, you know, stay tuned. We have a wide variety of topics, and they've also been recorded, so folks can go back through and listen to those as well. So we're trying to get those out. I also help coordinate the Barnyards and Backyards magazine. So while it's not maybe a hands-on activity that we're used to, we will have the next issue of the magazine coming out middle of the summer here. The most recent copy just came out. Um, it's actually free. So if you go to [barnyardsandbackyards.com](http://barnyardsandbackyards.com), you can download your free PDF of the spring edition. So yeah. [OVERLAPPING] Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** So Barnyards and Backyards, isn't it, it's part of UW Extension, but there's a whole bunch of other entities involved, right?

**Brian Sebade:** Right. Yep, yep. So we've got, you know, University of Wyoming Extension, of course, but then we also have Wyoming Department of Ag, Wyoming State Forestry, Wyoming Weed and Pest Council, we also have Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, and then the USDA also as a partner. We also have Audubon Wyoming, and then we also have some folks [00:42:00] that have started to help out from Wyoming Game and Fish. So it's really a collaborative effort and we try to come up with a wide variety of topics and address issues that might be out there.

**Jeff Edwards:** [OVERLAPPING] And so we hope- go ahead.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Can't you subscribe to that and get the actual paper copy? Isn't it like \$10 a year?

**Brian Sebade:** It is, yep.

**Jeff Edwards:** So Brian, if people wanted to subscribe to it, how would you do that? Is it on the same website?

**Brian Sebade:** Yep, you can go to the same website or pick up an old edition and you can fill out the form on the back.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. Perfect. Jerry, do you know if there are things going on in Goshen County that people ought to be aware of?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, they can start going to the extension agents here in Torrington and pick up your giant pumpkin seed. It's free and so, you know, if you want to experience growing a giant pumpkin with you and your child, you and your grandkid, or you.

**Jeff Edwards:** Or you, yourself.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Or you, yourself, or I, You could go ahead and call ahead, and they would probably just take the seed out to the parking lot and just give it to you so you don't have to have hands-on or touch anybody.

**Jeff Edwards:** So seed, do you say singular? You only allowed one seed?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I think we're giving out two.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Two seeds. Uh-huh. And so, probably they'll have some instructions along with that. I think that it's a little too early to talk about rabid skunks, but you know, it's coming up.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER] It's never too early to talk about rabid skunks.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** All right, so watch out. Watch out for 'em.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So what about you and your educational, uh, endeavors? Are you having some podcasts that people could look at?

**Jeff Edwards:** So, yeah. As Brian mentioned, I'm part of the Barnyards and Backyards Live program that we've been putting on. I think it's been very successful. We've had multiple programs on planting. Well, we started out with soils. We've been talking about planting and getting things to grow, and I believe Brian will be on, and we'll be talking about season extension here soon. And we've had two programs on livestock. We've had a program on purchasing, or choosing fowl, poultry, chickens, and then one program on sheep. The nice thing about these is that they are Zoom meetings and we're recording them and we're also broadcasting them live on Facebook. And so with that, those sessions are also being recorded. They're being posted on YouTube. They're being posted out on the Barnyards and Backyards Live website. And so if you miss a session, you can go out and find them and watch the backlog and those types of things. I think it's been a really good program in this particular time when people are kinda looking for some diversions, but that's the biggest thing that we have going on.

The other thing is, I've been working on and, um, prepping all the parts and pieces for a geodesic dome and videotaping all of that process because a lot of people [00:45:00] are curious about how to build these things and we don't have a manual in place yet. So my thought is that once I get all the parts and pieces prepped, then Ted Craig from Wyoming Department of Ag and myself, we would start having Zoom meetings and doing chapters on how to build particular parts and pieces. And if anybody's interested in those, they could participate and we can make it a discussion so it would be more interactive, and try to get people involved. And then we're there, and they can ask questions, and those types of things. But I think the way it's looking, that could be three or four separate programs just because of the length and the intricacies of the parts and pieces that we're working on. So-

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Uh-huh.

**Jeff Edwards:** That's coming. I think sometime in May, we'll probably do that.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I see.

**Jeff Edwards:** Um, but the geodesic dome projects, um, you know, we're kinda- shifting away from high tunnels and hoop houses. The geodesic domes are much sturdier. They're about the same in cost and go up really fast once you get all the parts and pieces done. We were able to construct one last fall in about nine hours start to finish. Unload, build it, cover it, walk away. [LAUGHTER] They are very interesting projects. So hopefully, they will gain in popularity. I'm seeing more and more of them around.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** And what I'm hearing is that there's a lot of people, even first-time people are trying to start a garden and start buying seeds. Local greenhouses are selling quite well. Somebody said that he hadn't ever seen that many seeds go out in a short period of time. And it's just because I think people are trying to have a little fresh garden variety in their diet, and I think that's a great idea.

**Brian Sebade:** Sure.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I'm also happy to report that starting in May, the Lawn and Garden Show will be weekly.

**Jeff Edwards:** Um, starting the last week of April, the Lawn and Garden Show is weekly.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It is weekly. Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. I think we've about extended our time. Thank you, Brian, for being our guest today. We appreciate the information.

**Brian Sebade:** Yeah. Thank you for the invite. I appreciate it.

**Jeff Edwards:** We might have you on again before the end of the season. Jerry is making me extend this thing. So I'm looking for volunteers who want to be on the program.

**Brian Sebade:** When you're scraping the bottom of the barrel for people [OVERLAPPING] [LAUGHTER] I'll- I'll be here.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh we don't believe that. You have good information, so thank you very much for being here. [OVERLAPPING] Jerry, it was good to see you again and, um, we will see you next week.

**Female Narrator:** [MUSIC] 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 and by University of Wyoming Extension, growing [00:48:00] people, knowledge, and communities. [MUSIC]