

Male Narrator: [00:00:00] Hey, Wyoming. [MUSIC] Welcome to the Lawn and Garden Podcast with the University of Wyoming Extension specialist, Jeff Edwards and co-host, Jerry Erschabek. Originally aired on KGOS and KERM in Torrington, join Jeff, Jerry, and all their special guests as they talk all things gardening in the great state of Wyoming; from plant variance to weather events, to pesticides and pollinators. Our Lawn and Garden Podcast helps you improve your home garden, as well as your small acreage. Let's welcome Jeff Edwards, Jerry Erschabek. Happy gardening, folks. [MUSIC]

Jeff Edwards: Good morning, everybody. This is Jeff Edwards for the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program, along with my co-host and sidekick, Jerry Erschabek. Good morning, Jerry. How are you?

Jerry Erschabek: Good morning, Jeff. Thanks for asking, and how about yourself?

Jeff Edwards: Good. I'm ready to be a little bit warmer, though. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabek: Oh, it's supposed to be a little warmer. [LAUGHTER] I've heard that story before.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. We've been hearing that story. Our guest today is Joyce Evans, the Mayor of Fort Laramie, and gardener, and lover of plants. We're going to be talking about planning and getting ready for warmer weather. Good morning, Joyce. How are you?

Joyce Evans: Good morning, Jeff. I'm well. Thank you. How are you, Jerry?

Jerry Erschabek: Hey, really good. Thank you. Hey, before we get started.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, yeah, go ahead.

Jerry Erschabek: I've found the best grass and weed killer. It's non-selective. Man, I know it kills everything. Its only one problem: it kills just about everything that's 20 degrees below zero. [LAUGHTER] I don't have a weed growing at all right now. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: I understand the 40 below is even better. [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabek: I'm sure.

Joyce Evans: Well, if we had it for a week, we could get rid of our bark beetles.

Jeff Edwards: Well, it actually needs to be a month, Joyce. We don't want to wish that on anybody. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: I was holding out for a week. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, I know. Hey, before we actually get into the program, let's take a little break and listen to our sponsors. We'll be back in a moment.

Female_2: [MUSIC] The University of Wyoming Extension and Cent\$ible Nutrition Program share educational resources across Wyoming, and we want to hear from you. How do you find information on your favorite topics? What social media platforms do you use? What's the best way to get our resources

into your hands? We want to know. Take our survey and earn an awesome multi-use kitchen tool, and help us get the best information to you in the way you want it. [MUSIC]

Jeff Edwards: Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program. I'm Jeff Edwards with my co-host, Jerry Erschabek. Our guest today is Joyce Evans. Prior to the break, we were talking a little bit about the lovely weather that [00:03:00] we've been experiencing, and most of the nation is dealing with the same thing, I guess. Let's put it that way. I don't know about you guys, but I don't remember the last time we had 12 inches of snow. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabek: No, I don't either. If the wind had been blowing, we would have been in real trouble.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. That's the thing. It's a really dry snow. It's a frost that's basically fallen out of the sky. Maybe we'll get some moisture out of it, but the best part would be that if it didn't blow away [LAUGHTER] or make really bad drifts.

Jerry Erschabek: Yeah.

Joyce Evans: The best part of it is I got my cross-country skis out yesterday and went skiing. It's wonderful.

Jeff Edwards: Very nice.

Jerry Erschabek: Yes. Diane keeps telling me I should try it, and I keep telling her it needs to have a little bit more of a base underneath it, but if you enjoy it, Joyce.

Joyce Evans: It's great. It's great. Yes, I recommend that you should try it.

Jerry Erschabek: I did make a path which Diane's cousin is referring to the race track. I made a path around our property so that I could, at least, get the dog out and take her for a loop around [LAUGHTER] our property without going through the snow.

Jeff Edwards: In my youth at the University of Wyoming, I, unfortunately, wrecked my car, and I had to bicycle for Thanksgiving to Easter.

Jerry Erschabek: Which was probably the best thing for you at that time.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, man. It really was, but the most fun I thought was a snowdrop, much like this. You'd put it in one gear, and tool around, and make little tracks. As long as you weren't on real slick cement, I had no problem, but over on the basketball courts was nice and slick it dropped me in a heartbeat. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabek: Yeah. I rode my bike all the time in Laramie, which I think about it now I think I was just nutty when it was this cold, [LAUGHTER] but hey, it worked.

Jeff Edwards: It worked. You're only 5-7 minutes away from campus, anyway, in most spots.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. Actually, I lived across town and had to cross the overpass and get over into campus. I had a little bit of a track. Instead of reminiscing, let's talk about the future. Where do we go from this train, Joyce? [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: Well, I always try to make a detailed plan of my garden before the garden comes into fruition. Of course, then I change it entirely, and it's a totally different picture. So I'm assuming that everyone has the past maps of their gardens and where they had everything. That's what you do, right, Jeff?

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Every year, it's right here.

Joyce Evans: He is pointing at his forehead, for those of you who can't see it through the radio. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Exactly.

Joyce Evans: Last year, I had a great plan. I was going to plant a spiral garden using the Three Sisters method where I planted a spiral [00:06:00] of corn, and around that, dry beans to grow up the corn. Then, I'm just going to have the nice squash plants around that. It was a great plan. When I put my garden in, it was totally European straight rows, the whole bit. I even got a string out, made the row straight, forget the spiral. [LAUGHTER] I had no idea why I'm doing this.

Jeff Edwards: Just taking the time to plan it out gives you something to think about. You get to think about how it's going to look and how it's going to hopefully taste because that's the point. We're growing a garden to eventually eat it. Yeah, it's a really good activity, whether you stick to that plan or not. No big deal.

Joyce Evans: That's good.

Jerry Erschabeck: It is nice to have a plan, though, a little bit of a plan. It helps you with your watering system. It helps you with getting certain areas ready. Jeff and I grow garlic, and you have to have that garlic situated in August. So you're not going to till it back up or put too much fertilizer on that area or whatever. Yeah. Planning is a great deal. You have to do some, but of course, just like you, Joyce, planning never really follows through until the planting date itself.

Joyce Evans: That's true.

Jeff Edwards: How long have you been gardening in the same spot?

Joyce Evans: We have the same garden spot. We've had that for a little bit nine years this year. We have the same spot, and we have to be really careful to make sure that we don't plant the same plant in the same place every year. That's what a map really is good for, is helping you rotate your crops and your types of crops.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Joyce Evans: That's what we use it for in a general way.

Jeff Edwards: Well, I pointed to my head when I was talking about my map. I do have a fact-checker that assists me in keeping that file correct. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: How is she? [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: She seems very well. Thank you for asking. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Hey, you can't plant that there. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Exactly. You can't do that. [OVERLAPPING]

Joyce Evans: [LAUGHTER] Referring to garlic. I think you have to make sure that you use a different spot every three years, is that correct?

Jeff Edwards: For a lot of these things, it's good to rotate on a three-year schedule. Things like tomatoes and peppers and those things that are very similar that can harbor diseases back and forth from each other. A three-year rotation is probably best to eliminate future problems. That's one of the things that I talk about when I do hide toggle workshops is, first of all, if I had the space, I would have three smaller high tunnels and dedicate one to tomato is one year and one to other things so you can divide it up into individual sections, and then rotate amongst the three of them or the four of them. Then the fourth one would be of course to have something planted for your chickens, [00:09:00] and allow the chickens to clean up.

Jerry Erschabeck: And eat.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, correct.

Jerry Erschabeck: Mother Earth News had an article in it long ago and far away where the chicken coops would open into a corn field and it was fence. Half the year or half this year, we would grow corn on the, let's say the left side. On the right side we would feed the chickens and let them go out there and run and pick and stuff. Some people would even let them grow into their corn after the corn was up pretty good because chickens will peck on greenery.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: But they will also eat all their grasshoppers. But then the next year you would farm corn where the chickens were fed and laid their manure down and just go back and forth. I thought that was always a great idea.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. I think next year this year is probably going to be a pretty bad grasshopper year once again. People are always asking about control tactics. I think chickens or gangs or one of the best things to have around. If you live in town, it's a little bit more difficult such that if you live out in the country, they do a really good job at cleaning stuff up.

Joyce Evans: Sounds like a good plan. I think 20 below helps and separate those over-wintering grasshoppers too.

Jerry Erschabeck: Hopefully.

Joyce Evans: [OVERLAPPING] Probably not the ones that lay their eggs, but.

Jeff Edwards: We can only hope. Yes. After we have the plan, do you sit around and look at all the seed catalog you've received, or is that in conjunction with the plan? Looking through the seed catalog was and then they can know what that would look good here. This might taste better than the last cucumbers I grew.

Joyce Evans: Well, I think seed catalog reading is an art and an entertainment unto itself. [LAUGHTER] But they start coming in December now they almost be Christmas these days. I've been looking at seed catalogs for some time. I've already ordered my seeds or at least at that portion of them because I think after last year where a lot of companies ran out of seed, so I have mine on my counter now where they're being safely guarded until time to plants and I will lose it. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: That is a reminder for those of you who haven't ordered your seeds yet, you might want to start doing that, thinking about it and getting it done because there were shortages last year. Some of the websites where you can order seed from, were overwhelmed and basically shut down. Plan ahead a little bit and be prepared.

Joyce Evans: Also you can get seeds that are organic seeds that aren't treated with anything that my particular seeds are organic and biodynamic. They're good seeds and they do keep well too, they'll keep if you don't plant [00:12:00] them all. Although that's not always the best idea.

Jeff Edwards: Sure.

Joyce Evans: But if you have to winter sum over, they will keep for you too. But I have a lot of raised beds in my garden. Last year I planted beans in a lot of the places that were grown other crops for the last several years. I'm really excited to see if that does help with the nutrition in the soil. That's one thing that the plans help with is knowing where you planted what last year.

Jeff Edwards: Sure. Trying to keep your nutrients in rotation as well.

Joyce Evans: Exactly.

Jerry Erschabeck: Jeff, I've also seen you were talking about high tunnel earlier and making sure you have a plan. I've seen some high tunnels been able to actually beyond rail or beyond skids. They can be moved forward or let's say north south. They could be moved north one spot and then moved south one spot so you actually have three spots then.

Jeff Edwards: Yes. There's a producer a very producer over in the woodland area who has a high tunnel that's on tracks. Actually the berries that he has two sections where the high tunnel can be and he protects a section early in the spring and then rolls it to a different location to protect the berries for late fall harvest. It is an interesting concept and I think a lot of that stems from some NRCS efforts to protect soil and allow for moisture to get in because high tunnel you have to add every bit of moisture that comes in. This allows for spring rains to hit the place where you're going to move it to in the fall and those types of things.

Jerry Erschabeck: If our listeners remember, we put up a deer fence and it's a chicken wire fence six feet high.

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Jerry Erschabeck: I had some real doubts whether we were really protecting from deer or not and we have a small little pond. Well, we were closing up the windows and turning all the lights off and outside there stood Bambi, looking back at us, gone, "What do you guys doing? [LAUGHTER] You need to add water to the pond, we have to drink, get down too far to drink." There are deer meandering through our area and yeah, that deer fence is keeping them out.

Jeff Edwards: I was afraid you were going to say that they were inside the fence.

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] Yeah. Nice and cozy. No, they go to the neighbor's garage and there's another fence nearby it. They're real cozy right there and they lay down and just before dawn they're up and out. You never really see them except on occasion.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Where we are, we had a deer all summer and fall and it's amazing [00:15:00] about November, they disappeared. I don't know where they go. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: They moved to town.

Jerry Erschabeck: They know when it's hunting season.

Jeff Edwards: That's right. They leave the country.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. Joyce, are you thinking of planting something brand new this year?

Joyce Evans: I am not being very creative at all this year. I'm also retired and thinking of maybe traveling more than watering and reading in the summer.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, yeah.

Joyce Evans: I'm sure I'll plant something.

Jerry Erschabeck: Are you destined to have a timer system or a good friend?

Joyce Evans: I rely on neighborhood children.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, yeah.

Joyce Evans: Who are very dependable [OVERLAPPING] and it's more fun.

Jeff Edwards: You know Jerry might need a summer job. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: But is he dependable?

Jeff Edwards: Well, I don't know. We might have to have some references.

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] I don't think that I can be relied upon. I screwed up the timeframe for this meeting, so I [LAUGHTER] don't know I've made apologies.

Joyce Evans: Well, I was going to go back to the deer problem. We have had a lot of deer moving into Fort Laramie. I saw an interesting solution to deer predation on gardens last summer. There's a museum in the Little Snake River Valley near Savery. They had a garden planted, it was unfenced, right out in the middle of a flat yard. That country is known for deer, there are hundreds and hundreds of deer that migrate through there and a resident deer. I wondered how they kept the deer away. When I looked closely at the garden, I noticed they had planted a huge circle of squash plants around the garden. It was kind of an oval or round shape. They had squash plants growing thickly around the whole perimeter, and then they had their tasty peas and lettuces and those types of things in the center. Apparently that kept the deer from getting to the delicious treats that they were looking for. Because I [OVERLAPPING] believe the deer, will walk through the squash plants.

Jeff Edwards: No, but they will eat the squash blossoms and they may have a hesitancy of jumping over a width of squash plants.

Joyce Evans: I think it was relatively wide.

Jeff Edwards: That's interesting.

Joyce Evans: I thought that was a good system.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, I know the deer like those squash blossoms because you go outside and whistles before our deer fence and you go out there and, "Boy, look at all the blossom" and then they're gone. I mean, they're not on ground [LAUGHTER] they're gone. My assumption is that those deer are eating the squash blossoms. But what a great idea.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. [OVERLAPPING]

Joyce Evans: I thought it would be worth trying.

Jeff Edwards: That would be interesting to see and try. That Savery area is a really pretty area [00:18:00] of the state.

Joyce Evans: It is beautiful down there.

Jeff Edwards: It's a really nice drive between bags and encampment to see that. Jerry, you're not familiar with that area, are you?

Jerry Erschabeck: I know bags and I know Encampment, but I don't know where Savery is, is that just further south? [OVERLAPPING].

Jeff Edwards: In between the two.

Jerry Erschabeck: It's very pretty country. Between Saratoga and encampment, very pretty.

Jeff Edwards: Different areas of the state.

Jerry Erschabeck: I think we're going to be using more of the classic annuals, marigolds, snap dragons, nicotiana. I'm not sure if I'm saying this right, please correct me. It's either selloum or cleome. It's like a tall plant with big cloud, big leaves and then a flower head on top, kind of little trumpets.

Jeff Edwards: I know what you're talking about and I don't think I can pronounce it correctly either.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Joyce Evans: I had it's pronounced cleome. Its North American bee plant, isn't it?

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh boy, you got me there. I don't know.

Joyce Evans: That's much easier to say.

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] I agree and remember.

Jeff Edwards: Is that an a is bee balm family.

Joyce Evans: It may be. I'm not sure.

Jeff Edwards: Okay.

Joyce Evans: But it's cleome. I think it's one of the names for it.

Jerry Erschabeck: Then of course, throw in our dahlias and iris and roses and some other perennials that we have comes up. We like perennials because you don't have to mess with them much unless you want to move them.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. I'm not a big annual planter. I prefer to set it and forget it, kind of the run [inaudible] method of gardening. [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, yeah.

Jeff Edwards: We like to plan a lot of perennials and I think we've talked about this last fall, but the new thing that we're trying is something called current. A recommendation that we got from Lucinde Maze last fall. Crandall's clove currant, my file checker just whispered to me what it was. Crandall's clove currant, which apparently is yellow flowers on it, that's smell like cloves or spices. [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: That sounds cool.

Jeff Edwards: We planted a hedge of those along the east side of one of our retaining walls, and hopefully it'll hide the wall and do what it's supposed to do.

Joyce Evans: How tall do they get?

Jeff Edwards: I think 4-6 and about the same wide, 4-6 feet.

Joyce Evans: Sounds interesting.

Jeff Edwards: In a couple of years, maybe you will be able to have that.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah. Yeah. That's a perennial bush?

Jeff Edwards: Yes. Sure.

Jerry Erschabeck: Interesting.

Jeff Edwards: Joyce, if you're interested in currant berries [LAUGHTER].

Joyce Evans: I am interested in currant berries. Of course I am.

Jeff Edwards: There may be a lot of those available.

Joyce Evans: Are they edible? [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Of course.

Joyce Evans: [00:21:00] Okay. Don't give me something that's inedible.

Jeff Edwards: Well, we'll check on that just to make sure. [NOISE] Wait a minute, inedible like aronia, [LAUGHTER].

Joyce Evans: No, dangerously inedible.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, right. Jerry, are you familiar with the aronia?

Jerry Erschabeck: I am not.

Jeff Edwards: We had never heard of aronia in about, I don't know, 10 years ago maybe they became very popular. Joyce, am I correct in saying that, that there were more of them planted starting about a decade ago?

Joyce Evans: I think so. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Aronia, the plants are very nice little bushes. There's about a lot of different varieties. They have berries on them that actually look like blueberries. However, they do not taste like blueberries whatsoever. They are high in antioxidants and they are an acquired taste. [OVERLAPPING]

Joyce Evans: They are native North American plants.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, they are.

Joyce Evans: They are not imported plants. They substitute nicely for blueberries in things like muffins and pancakes. You can juice them. You can flavor vodka with them. You can make puddings with them [OVERLAPPING].

Jeff Edwards: They do not yield a lot of juice.

Joyce Evans: They do not. They do yield a lot of berries, however. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: They yield a lot of color.

Joyce Evans: Yes, they do. They're beautiful. They freeze well. They're easy to preserve. They will last a long time. If you're at Jeff's house they last forever. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Yes. I tried to give them to Joyce and Mike every year. They pick a packet, then leave. It's like no, no, no. There's more than a packet. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: I think two gallons in the freezer is enough for two old people for the winter [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschbeck: Now, is that what's called the German blueberry?

Jeff Edwards: No. [OVERLAPPING] That is entirely different and we will not be talking about that.

Jerry Erschbeck: Okay. [LAUGHTER] Because it's the same thing and it refreshes itself really easily.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. These don't. These are shrubs.

Jerry Erschbeck: Okay.

Jeff Edwards: I don't know, the seeds in them are very tiny, right, Joyce?

Joyce Evans: The seeds are not a problem.

Jeff Edwards: They have some very stringent qualities. If you're a wine connoisseur, I think you probably know what I'm talking about. But apparently they're very healthy, right, Joyce?

Joyce Evans: That's why I'm still here, alive [LAUGHTER].

Jeff Edwards: Working on preservation.

Joyce Evans: That's right. [LAUGHTER] Self-preservation.

Jeff Edwards: [OVERLAPPING] Well, good. I see that we're about halfway through our program. So let's take a break and listen to our sponsors and [00:24:00] then we'll be back with the second half of our program. [MUSIC]

Female_1: Do you want to learn how to manage your money, but you're not sure where to start? UW Extension is here to help. See our Facebook page at noon on Mondays for Michelle's Monday Money Minutes.

Michelle Vigil: Hi, I'm Michelle Vigil, with the University of Wyoming Extension. I'm so happy you joined me today. I'm going to be providing money tips to help you be less stressed and less scared about your money.

FEMALE_1: Learn about building a budget, eligibility for stimulus checks, tax prep information and more.

Jeff Edwards: We're back, everybody. Welcome to the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program. I'm Jeff Edwards from the University of Wyoming Extension and my co-host, Jerry Erschabek. Our guest today is Joyce Evans and we've been talking about spring planning and getting ready for our gardens, amongst other things. [NOISE] Where do you want to go for the second half of our programs, Jerry?

Jerry Erschabek: Well, you sent me a video about crack farming.

Jeff Edwards: Wait a minute. Say that again.

Jerry Erschabek: You sent me a video about crack farming. They were farming B20 bricks.

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Jerry Erschabek: I think these people had laid down underground watering systems, perforated hose, that sort of thing.

Jeff Edwards: Wait a minute. I think these people live in an environment where they don't have to irrigate. So they don't have to.

Jerry Erschabek: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: They don't [OVERLAPPING] have to worry about planting. The video came from an Asian country. I don't know exactly where, but they had laid down a block patio.

Jerry Erschabek: A brick patio.

Jeff Edwards: A brick patio, and left enough space in between the bricks where they fill them with soil, and then they were growing their garden in that space between the bricks. It was really easy to weed.

Jerry Erschabek: So clean.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. It was the cleanest garden I've ever seen. I think maybe in our climate, we could probably do the same thing, but I would lay a drip tape in between those bricks at the base and then fill that slot with soil, and voila, it's weed free garden. Yeah.

Jerry Erschabek: Yeah. No weeds whatsoever, except they're in the crack of the brick.

Jeff Edwards: Right. I don't know that I won't necessarily refer to it as crack gardening [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabek: Tell me a better word.

Jeff Edwards: Maybe let us just call it patio gardening or something. [LAUGHTER]. [OVERLAPPING] But since we are on the radio, that is a very descriptive way to get across what was happening in the video.

Jerry Erschabeck: At my old building, there was a south side and then a parking lot adjacent to the south side of the building phase. There happened to be a [00:27:00] crack in between the asphalt and the brick. I got a great idea. I had a whole bunch of Marigold seeds. So I went and I planted through out there and then I've laid down some nice soil, and then I started watering it by hand. Marigolds are tough, tough, tough, tough. They did really well in that crack between the asphalt and the building. I took it from there that I was crack farming. [LAUGHTER].

Jeff Edwards: It was very interesting in this video because they actually had, they were growing corn in this space between the bricks and cabbage and eggplant.

Jerry Erschabeck: Zucchini.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Tomatoes.

Jeff Edwards: Yes. I think it is a very doable type of thing. I don't know if it would get too hot based on the heat reflecting off of the bricks.

Jerry Erschabeck: Again, it was a tropical country. So obviously not. Or you wanted to do, you can put a shade cloth over it.

Jeff Edwards: Exactly. Yeah. It would be something to try, I think. Yeah. We've been putting 30 percent shade cloth over the tops of the high tunnels and they're actually more productive than if you don't do that.

Jerry Erschabeck: We have a plant that's called Moon Flower. It puts out a really fluorescent large trumpet that shows white and especially is really white in the moonlight. It has a tendency to fall into whatever crack, and we have a brick pathway in between our house and the old garage. It came up with in between there and who he marveled at how it could grow between the crack.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah. Might as will be using that space.

Jerry Erschabeck: No kidding. What floored me about that video was how clean of gardening that was. Your fruits and vegetables, they didn't get any dirt on them and no splash up. No splash up from dirt. [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: Have you ever seen anything like that?

Joyce Evans: I have not. The only plants that have grown between bricks at my house or in the patio, and there are things like metaru and I keep trying to pull them up and it's not easy. [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabeck: Dry some of that in 20 below [LAUGHTER].

Joyce Evans: It's working. It's working right now.

Jerry Erschabeck: It's working.

Jeff Edwards: Can you get that in a 2.5 gallon jug, Jerry [LAUGHTER]?

Jerry Erschabeck: I told my brother-in-law that I wanted him to send up a couple of five gallon buckets of sunshine, he goes, "My lids have fell off. So I can't do that." [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Can't get it trapped.

Jerry Erschabeck: Can't get [00:30:00] it trapped up.

Joyce Evans: Maybe you could ship it with the vaccine since it has to be super cold [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabeck: Maybe. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Very interesting.

Jerry Erschabeck: Have either one of you grown Jerusalem Artichokes in your garden?

Jeff Edwards: No. When I was in high school, there was a gentleman who was growing Jerusalem Artichokes that my parents knew, but that is my only experience with Jerusalem Artichoke.

Jerry Erschabeck: Did they let him grow to flower, do you remember?

Jeff Edwards: I think that he probably did, and then he had a heck of a time trying to get rid of him afterwards.

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] Yeah. I understand they have a very pretty flower, but I didn't understand the part about hard to get rid of it later. Will they come back year after year?

Jeff Edwards: They have a rise ominous root system. If you are unable to get all the pieces, it will continue to come back in that place. But if I remember correctly, isn't there a substance from the extraction from the roots that is used in insulin or insulin manufacturer, is that correct, Joyce? [NOISE] Or am I thinking about something else.

Joyce Evans: I'm not sure. I don't remember. I tried to grow them once in a green house. This was when I lived at 7,000 feet elevation, but I didn't have trouble getting rid of them because they didn't do well enough to worry about [LAUGHTER].

Jeff Edwards: Again, it was a dose of 40 below [LAUGHTER].

Joyce Evans: Frequent 40 below [LAUGHTER].

Jeff Edwards: We all need a little of that every once in awhile. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: It keeps us humble.

Jeff Edwards: Makes us appreciate 10 degrees. [LAUGHTER].

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, man.

Joyce Evans: It does.

Jeff Edwards: Whoever thought that you'd say, "Oh, the forecast today is 28 to 33. Oh my gosh, that's warm."

Joyce Evans: Wow. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Wow. Can hardly wait.

Jeff Edwards: That's a 60 degree difference than what we've been experiencing. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: It is. It's good for us.

Jeff Edwards: Yes. We've had programs about trees and we probably need to revisit a little bit of that again. Once this cold weather moves out of here and the snow melts off, we need to evaluate if there's enough moisture there. I think that Amy has suggested using a long screwdriver to try to poke into the soil. Because if I see the weather correctly, next week or the week after next is going to be in the 40s or whatever. So if that's true and we don't have enough moisture, should probably poke the holes out and try to water your shrubs or your pine trees and try to keep them hydrated because when it gets this cold and we have a little [00:33:00] bit of wind, things dry out really quickly. Just check those things again and keep an eye on them. If you feel that you need to, go ahead and water.

Jerry Erschabeck: Joyce, are you doing anything with your geodesic dome right now? [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: We're planning the geodesic dome.

Jerry Erschabeck: Oh, there you go.

Joyce Evans: Yes.

Jeff Edwards: They're relying on an unreliable worker at this point in time. [OVERLAPPING]

Jerry Erschabeck: You need references.

Jeff Edwards: To actually get some stuff done.

Joyce Evans: Well, actually the preschoolers are starting to plant some of the plants that will go in the greenhouse and they have started with some herbs that may not go in the greenhouse, but they're learning about herbs. We are starting some plantings, so we'll be ready to go when we get those raised beds finished. Go ahead.

Jeff Edwards: My schedule should be opening up here, so those types of things will be occurring.

Jerry Erschabeck: [OVERLAPPING] So let me ask.

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Jerry Erschabeck: Can heat your geodesic dome with a little space heater?

Jeff Edwards: You can and people have. It might be a little bit easier in a geodesic dome than in a hoop house or a longer type structure. But I don't know that it's very efficient. Let's just take the last eight, 10 days that we've had where we had this funny cloud cover where we don't see any sunshine and cold is cold. I don't know how much propane you would actually go through to try to keep a space like that warm enough to grow. My recommendation would be to use frost blankets or those types of things and make sure that in this type of weather to cover things. Up until this point, we had greens growing in our high tunnel and I haven't checked on them because I can't open the door to the high tunnel right now, but I think that some of them will probably have survive this. I do have other things growing out there. Our strawberries are growing in the high tunnel and I have four layers of frost cloth on top of them and they'll be just fine. You got to cover things up.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now my crazy pumpkin friends will put heat tape into the ground or a heat wire. Agreeing that right now is not the time to plug it in. But I was just wondering if the geodesic dome could be heated in more appropriately later into the season. This is still just the end of February. So like middle of March or end of March maybe to cut down on those really cold nights.

Jeff Edwards: Last year, we planted a bunch of different [00:36:00] things the first day of spring which was in March and did just fine. So no additional heat, those types of things were required. But we didn't cover at night. During the day, the temperature warms up the soil and then at night it's going to get whatever the temperature is outside. So if you can cover things up, it'll protect them and keep on growing.

Joyce Evans: I think quite a bit of heat stays in the soils till once they get warmed up. It does get really warm in there during the sunny days. Ask Jeff. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Yes.

Joyce Evans: If you had some way to black barrels with water or something, you could probably retain quite a bit of heat and it would stay in that soil, but that takes up space, so it's kind of a trade-off. I think you just have to time your plantings a little bit to respect the seasonality of the world rather than just try to change everything.

Jeff Edwards: Well, and I have seen individuals who put in a water feature inside of a geodesic dome. It's a total water column. They'll make this thing about eight feet deep and pretty good size. That provides tampering of the temperature, so to speak. It becomes a heat sink and a heat source. So at night it lets off some of that and I think it's a good idea. We probably won't be doing that in the one in Fort Laramie, but at least not in this one. Maybe in the next one, right Joyce?

Joyce Evans: We can call it the pool. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Exactly. The Fort Laramie Pool. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: That's right.

Jeff Edwards: Only one person at a time. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: If you did put that water feature in, you could always dig the retaining pond or pool down a little deeper, so you'd always be sucking up 50 degree water.

Jeff Edwards: The ones that I've seen, they will take a sheet of pressure treated plywood and dig their hole, use that as their liner on the inside of the hole and then use a pond liner inside of that to help retain the water. So it just add some structure and rigidity up above the surface of the ground. Really, you're putting about six feet into the soil and it should stay about 50 degrees all year round. It's up to the surface.

Jerry Erschabeck: Cool ideas. Just one more thing you can do with a geodesic dome or a hoop house.

Jeff Edwards: I've been fascinated by hydroponics and aquaponics and those types of systems. I just have never had the will [LAUGHTER] to mess around with them that much and try to get something like that started. But there's a lot of systems out there that are prepackaged and you can just set them up and put them wherever you [00:39:00] think you need to and make things happen. Have you ever messed around with aquaponics, Jerry, or hydroponics or thought about it?

Jerry Erschabeck: No, I never have. Other than trying to start an avocado seed.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, sure.

Jerry Erschabeck: Something like that. Or I've seen where you could take the bottom of a celery stalk and cut off the top and put the bottom in water and then supposedly you have more celery growing. Seen videos of that, but never really done much in that way.

Jeff Edwards: You've been spending too much time on Facebook. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: Sounds like YouTube probably. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Whatever you want to find.

Jeff Edwards: Carrots you can do that with. Apparently, you can do that with pineapple. I've never tried that because I've had the luxury of being able to grow things in the gardens. It'd be worth to try.

Jerry Erschabeck: I find it interesting that your kiddos are starting plants and one more, it just to maybe an idea, I don't know if how you feel about it, but you could hire on to start seeds for people and those kiddos could do that at I think maybe five dollars a tray. If you had the space, you could maybe help those kiddos make a few dollars for an outing or more seeds or something.

Joyce Evans: That sounds like an excellent idea. I will pass that on to the teacher and see what she thinks. Right now we have them pretty busy. They're starting all of the seeds for our parks. We have Memorial Park where we have, under the flags, we have a planter there. They are starting all of our plants for that this year. They did last year too, started some perennials. We'll have to see what comes up this year. But we're doing annual this year and they're going to plant all of those. Then they're going to also start all the plants for the dome. This year we decided that we would do the community garden

with just plants that are already started and not give people space this year to grow their own in the community dome. We'll see how that works. But the preschoolers are starting all of those plants. We're pretty excited to see how that will play out. Of course, that gives them the opportunity to harvest some of the produce in the fall and the teacher is showing them how to take it from a plant form into something they like, like pumpkin pie or something like that. But she's done a lot with tomatoes and that sort of thing that they grew last year in the community garden. It's a good educational opportunity. It's a good opportunity for the community. It's working really well. I'm excited that they have the plant started.

Jerry Erschabeck: A good opportunity for those kiddos to get those memories. Instead of Future Farmers of America, it's Future. Well, still be Future Farmers.

Jeff Edwards: Yes it would.

Jerry Erschabeck: Farmers and gardeners.

Joyce Evans: That's right.

Jerry Erschabeck: If you have had any experience that you can [00:42:00] draw back on as a kid into your youth or now your young adulthood and even something you can do into your retirement age, that you can garden and you can garden to your ability. It's very rewarding.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Joyce Evans: Yeah. Another thing is with preschoolers, the families tend to get involved. We had families coming and utilizing the community garden because their preschoolers had started the plants and the kids were really excited and the parents were too. I think that's really a good thing nutritionally and it gives people the information that they need, that they can actually garden and grow things. We hope in the future to get some food preservation classes going so that we can help families prolong that gardening season and use that produce later on in the year. We have a lot of concepts around the greenhouse and the gardens, that I think it's going to be really good for the community and the people who live here.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah, I think the whole program is a community engagement type of activity. You're not just planting on a limited scale, what you are doing is influencing the whole community for learning.

Joyce Evans: That's our hope to do that. We want to get the full cycle ingrained in these kids that you can compost what you don't eat, what you consider waste, and it becomes something that your plants can use in the future. We're going to put that composting component in there. I think it's good for people to have that information, even if they never use it themselves, but to understand that cycle of how things work. We really believe that this is good for the community as a whole and not just the preschoolers, and not just the old ladies that totter out there and pull the weeds. [LAUGHTER] Anyway, I think it's a positive thing. We're working on landscaping that area in front of town hall. It's been a wheat patch and we're trying to get that landscaped so it's pleasant and pleasing and not all in grass, because we want to help people understand that there are plants that are beautiful and functional, that aren't just grass and don't just suck up water.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, Joyce, I know it's just a little early, but we'll sure get you on the list to have some giant pumpkin seeds to put on your perimeter. Half those kiddos see, maybe, if they could grow something of size more than maybe 100 pounds. The delight in people's eyes when they get to see and grow a giant pumpkin is just undeniable.

Joyce Evans: Well, we are looking forward to some pumpkins of epic proportion.

Jerry Erschabeck: Epic. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Joyce, does the plan for the garden currently incorporate or will it incorporate a [00:45:00] web of squash plants on the outside to keep the deer out? [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: Well, I'm actually thinking that that wouldn't be a good thing to put. We're having the raised beds around the outside and I honestly think that would be a good place for that type of plant because it will defer the deer a bit and it will also prevent taking up all the inside space with those very large plants. I'm seriously thinking that some trailing plants like that are a good plan for the outside.

Jerry Erschabeck: Now, would you think about zucchini. Zucchini, good gosh, if you're doing that, that zucchini, you could do a lot of giveaway.

Joyce Evans: I might be run out of town if we have that much zucchini. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

Jeff Edwards: They'd have to start finding where they left their keys.

Joyce Evans: Yeah. People will have to lock their cars because during zucchini season, you ever know. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: But that'd be a good something that would be edible as well in case the deer did step on it or not step on it, eat the blooms, would make the plant proliferate, wouldn't it, Jeff? If you took the blooms off?

Jeff Edwards: Not necessarily. We tried limiting the growth of melons one year. Limited them we did. They did not do well. Yeah, trimming stuff off isn't the best way to go if you want to grow a lot.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Joyce Evans: Yeah. I think cutting the flowers off probably puts more energy into the fruit that already exists, but it probably doesn't increase the plant growth.

Jeff Edwards: Yeah.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: I think we're getting close to our time for the week. I think, Jerry, you wanted to say a few things as we wrap up? If there's closing comments that either of you would like to make, that would be fantastic.

Jerry Erschabeck: Joyce, you got anything?

Joyce Evans: No, I think we covered the Fort Laramie Botanical Garden quite well. Thank you.

Jerry Erschabeck: [LAUGHTER] One should go to Fort Laramie and drive around and look at some of those things. They're really quite interesting. You-all still have the growing wall that is hydroponic.

Joyce Evans: We do.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, that's interesting to look at. Then I suggest looking at that geodesic dome.

Joyce Evans: Please walk into it and take a look because it is open to the public. Anybody can come and take a look.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah.

Jeff Edwards: Perfect.

Jerry Erschabeck: Yeah, perfect.

Jeff Edwards: You can't miss it. Drive-up Main Street, look on the left-hand side.

Joyce Evans: [LAUGHTER] We took the Christmas lights down.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, okay. Yeah. Good to know.

Jerry Erschabeck: On a personal note, Myrna and I are retiring from chiropractic care. She says that she was always the gopher, but I think she was always the glue.

Jeff Edwards: Yes, of course.

Jerry Erschabeck: I think we're going to try [00:48:00] to have a soil profile in our garden rather than a weed profile. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: But wait a minute. Now, if you have more time, that means you can rotor till more. You need to wean yourself off that thing.

Jerry Erschabeck: I counted how many times I rotor tilled and I was down to seven times.

Jeff Edwards: Oh, good lord. [LAUGHTER]

Joyce Evans: He's a recreational rotor tiller.

Jeff Edwards: Yes. Any more than three, that's recreational, buddy. [LAUGHTER]

Jerry Erschabeck: Three is okay, seven's too many. All right. I got it.

Joyce Evans: Yes. [LAUGHTER]

Jeff Edwards: Sorry. Please continue.

Jerry Erschabeck: I think I'm done. Everybody, thank you so much for listening to us. I think we do always have a good time. We tried to anyway. We have some laughs and giggles. Hopefully, we learn a little bit about gardening. I know I do.

Jeff Edwards: There's always a word that we fumble on and have to look it up for next time and whether we bring it up next time or not, [LAUGHTER] that's if we remember. But yes, thank you-all for joining us, and listening to us, and putting up with us. As we get closer to growing season, we'll continue to keep doing this. Thank you, everybody. Thanks, Joyce, for joining us today.

Joyce Evans: Thank you.

Jeff Edwards: Jerry, as always, thank you for being here.

Jerry Erschabeck: As always. See you next time.

Jeff Edwards: Even though we have to work around your schedule.

Jerry Erschabeck: Well, it shouldn't be much anymore.

Jeff Edwards: [LAUGHTER] All right. Again, thank you all for joining us. I hope you have a good week and happy gardening. [MUSIC]

Male Narrator: You've been listening to Lawn and Garden with the University of Wyoming Center specialist, Jeff Edwards and co-host Jerry Erschabeck. As the snow melts and the sun breaks, the University of Wyoming Extension has many upcoming virtual and hybrid learning programs available to you. Listen each week for details on new events and how to make your garden flourish. Good day and happy gardening. [MUSIC]