



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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Lose Weight and Earn Money!

Sallie Strole, Johnson's East Store

Whose curiosity isn't piqued by these types of announcements offering spectacular results with little or no work?

It's the same in the gardening world. Ads tempt you with easy solutions to landscape dilemmas, and there is just enough truth in the claims to make the reader think that this time it's the real thing.

Having problems with your lawn? You could plant Amazoy, the grass that will save you time, work and money. The only down side seems to be that it goes "off its green color" in the winter. The truth is that zoysia is a fine grass, but it is not a wonder cure for lawn woes. Planting plugs is time consuming work and zoysia is slow to grow and fill in, allowing weeds to get a head start on the grass. The watering requirements for zoysia are about the same as for fescue and "off its green color" simply means that zoysia is brown half the year.

So what about Canada Green for quick cover and a green lawn 12 months of the year? Best guess on this, since the exact variety of this grass is omitted from the print information, would be that it's a rye grass. Rye is extremely fast growing, but alas, usually dies in our Kansas summers.

What better answer to that heat than instant shade with trees that grow 6-10 ft. a year. The austrees, poplars and paulownia do grow rapidly. The flip side is that they are weak wooded trees prone to wind damage and susceptible to insect and disease attack. Many plants advertised in national publications are not well adapted to grow in the extremes of the Kansas climate.

The multicolored butterfly bush and rose of sharon, the fragrant old fashion lilac and the spectacular Stargazer lilies are all legitimate plants; but the size and quality of what you receive through the tabloid type ads are usually inferior to what you could buy locally.

Then there are miracle tomato trees that grow as tall as a man in three months and produce hundreds of tomatoes. Of course, when you think about it there are many varieties that will grow that large and produce abundant fruit. And isn't production more a matter of picking the best type of tomato for the area and good soil preparation and aftercare? For the same \$3-4 per plant (plus shipping and handling) you can come to Johnson's and select several healthy plants from the dozens of varieties we will have in stock.

It can be fun to look through the catalogs and ads but just remember to take the exaggerated claims with a grain of salt, because if it sounds too good to be true it probably is ... except for the "lose weight and earn money." You can do that by getting a job at Johnson's in the spring!