

It looks good to eat, but is it safe?

The goal of any plant in our landscape is to survive. They do this by producing offspring or seeds which come in many different shapes and sizes. Some fruit or nuts such as apples or walnuts are grown to eat.

What about other trees and plants in our landscapes that produce fruit or seeds that look similar to the ones we know are safe to eat? Can we eat them? How do they taste?

Below are just a few common plants that you may have in your landscape and may be wondering if you could eat it safely.

Are crabapples safe to eat?

Crabapples are safe to consume as long as you don't eat too many of them. Actually, the only difference between crabapples and apples is the size of the fruit. By definition, crabapples have fruit that are two inches or less in diameter, and apples are more than two inches in diameter. By this definition, most of the apples grown from seed will be crabapples. The fruiting apples are grafted.

So did people ever plant crabapples from seed? Of course they did. Just think of Johnny Appleseed. But those apples were normally used for jelly, applesauce, and cider and not for fresh eating.

There is one other caveat with using crabapples from a tree in the landscape. Make sure the tree hasn't been sprayed as an ornamental with a pesticide that isn't labeled for fruit tree apples. If it has, then the fruit should not be used.

Are acorns edible?

If you have an oak tree, you have probably noticed the acorns they produce. They usually don't last long once they drop because they are a favorite food of various wildlife species including squirrels and deer.



Clint Milliman

• Knowledge for Life

But they are not as popular with people as some of our other native nuts such as walnuts. Although all acorns are edible, some are better than others. Many are quite bitter due to high levels of tannin. The level of tannin in the acorn meat varies with the oak species. Some species have acorns that have naturally sweeter meats than others.

Oak species can be split into two groups: white oaks and red oaks. White oaks usually have acorn meats with a lower tannin content than red oaks and are sweeter. Individual oak trees usually can be placed in one of these two groups by looking at specific characteristics. White oaks tend to have leaves with rounded lobes rather than the bristly points normally found with red oaks. Also, red oaks typically have deeply ridged, dark-colored bark as opposed to the grayish-brown, scaly bark of white oaks.

Examples of white oaks include bur, white, English, chinkapin, and post oak. Red oaks include pin, red, black and Shumard oak.

Although the white oaks tend to have sweeter acorn meats than the reds, all oaks may have to be treated to leach out some of the tannin. To do this, place shelled acorns in a saucepan and cover them with water. Bring the water to a boil. Change the water when it becomes yellow with tannin. Repeat until the water remains clear.

After the tannins have been removed, drain the water and place the meats on a cookie

sheet and dry slowly in the oven on low heat. Taste test to make sure the tannins have been removed and the nuts are sweet.

Can you eat ornamental sweet potatoes?

We often receive the question as to whether ornamental sweet potatoes are safe to eat. The answer is yes. Note that they are chosen for ornamental qualities rather than taste and so may not have the quality of our traditional types.

Are the berries of the pokeweed safe to eat?

A number of people have asked the name of the weed with the large leaves and purple-black berries that hang in a cluster. This perennial is known as pokeweed. All parts of this plant are poisonous, especially the roots. Signs of poisoning include abdominal cramps, diarrhea, vomiting, weakness, drowsiness and difficulty in breathing. One of the toxins found in pokeweed is the protein lectin, which can cause abnormalities in white blood cells.

Surprisingly, young leafy springtime shoots are sometimes eaten after thorough cooking. Though cooking eliminates most of the toxins, there is still a danger of being poisoned from handling and preparing the shoots as well as ingesting improperly cooked plants.

Berries can be attractive to children. Cut down and discard pokeweed that might come into contact with kids. This plant is a perennial. You may want to spray it with a herbicide next year before it is large enough to be attractive to children.

Clint Milliman is the Thomas County agriculture and natural resources agent with Kansas State Research and Extension. A native of Illinois, Milliman works with area 4-H clubs, farmers and ranchers.

Deaths

Darlene F. Seele

Darlene F. Seele, 83, Colby, died Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2011, at the Prairie Senior Living Complex in Colby.

Services are pending with Harrison Chapel in Colby, (785) 462-2331.

Colby Rotary Club

Colby Rotary Club met Sept. 20 at Colby Community College with 33 members and guest Joyce Washburn.

Washburn was announced as a prospective member.

The club president informed membership that District Governor Keith Hooper from Smith Center will attend the Oct. 11 meeting.

Patrick Toth had the program. He introduced Barry Kaaz, Dean

of External Affairs at the college, who gave a presentation about building updates to improve energy efficiency at the college. Kaaz also explained the alternative energy curriculum now available to students.

Nancy LePell won Roto-Lotto

Colby Rotary meets on Tuesdays at the college student union, room 106.

—Relda Galli

Abilene Hustlers celebrate 4-H Week

The Abilene Hustlers 4-H Club is taking part in this year's National 4-H Week from Oct. 2 to Oct. 8.

The week gives recognition to youth who have made an impact in the community and those who are stepping up to the challenges of a complex and changing world.

The group will meet on Monday, when officers elected in September will be installed. Members of the club also recorded public service announcements at KRDO to be played during the week to promote membership and activities, said community leader Donna Lamm.

Lamm said that during October, the club will have a Grandparents' Day at the Senior Progress Center. The club will prepare and serve a meal, provide entertainment and play bingo with guests.

The national website says 4-H youth are "breaking through ob-

stacles and pushing our country forward by making measurable differences right where they live."

Lamm said they are making a difference in Thomas County with a variety of activities they sponsor throughout the year such as a potluck, caroling and a soup supper in December.

"We give club awards in November, have Parents' Night in February, Mini Club Day in March and the summer is spent getting ready for the Thomas County Fair in July," said Lamm.

Membership in 4-H is open to those aged seven to 19 and is encouraged for all youth who are interested in contributing to the community and taking part in local activities.

"There are many projects to interest 4-H members and the Abilene Hustlers encourage local youth to get involved in 4-H," said Lamm.

Abilene Hustlers 4-H Club

The Abilene Hustlers met on July 10 at the Pioneer Memorial Library for the Club Tour. Ten members were present.

Members shared what they were taking to the Thomas County Fair. Entries included woodworking, buymanship, clothing construction and revue, photography, entomology and arts and crafts.

Community leader Donna Lamm requested volunteers to make a club booth and float. The Stramel and Freeman families

agreed to make the booth. The Gerstner and Lamm families offered to do the float. Members were reminded about fair set up, clean up and release of exhibits.

The next meeting was to be on Labor Day

The club went swimming at the Colby Aquatic Center after the meeting.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day	
Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$6.69
Corn (bushel)	\$6.29
Milo (hundredweight)	\$10.39
Soybeans (bushel)	\$11.33

Workshop on hearing technology to be in Oakley

A state agency, a distribution program and a relay service are coming together to offer a workshop to provide resources and information about technologies to assist those that have difficulty hearing.

The workshops, in five different locations, include one in Oakley from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 12, at the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, 703 West Second. There will be one in Hays as well, from 9 a.m. to noon, Thursday, Oct. 13, at the Hays Public Library, 1205 Main St.

The workshop will cover what technology is available, who can benefit from each device, where to shop for the devices and even how to get some items at no cost. The goal is to educate Kansans so they can make informed decisions

to maintain or even improve their quality of life.

It is estimated that 10 percent of the U.S. population have difficulty hearing, including nearly 300,000 Kansans. These programs provide information and resources that many struggle to find or are embarrassed to seek out. Topics covered will include hearing aids, signaling devices, telephones and assistive listening devices. Individuals with hearing loss, family members and professionals are encouraged to attend.

The Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is a state agency to advocate for and facilitate access to quality, coordinated and comprehensive services for Kansans who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The Kansas Telecommunica-

tions Access Program is a telecommunication equipment distribution program to provide specialized telephone equipment to Kansans with disabilities. Those with a hearing loss or other disability can apply and receive free equipment if they are Kansas residents, have telephone service, have a disability that impedes the use of a standard telephone, and have income of less than \$55,000 per year.

Hamilton Relay operates the Kansas Relay Center, providing telecommunications relay services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and speech disabled. Telecommunications Relay Service is free 24-hour service that provides equal communication access via the phone to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled.

For information please contact any of the following or to request special accommodations such as interpreters, or real-time captioning for any of the sessions:

Tim Anderson, Kansas Telecommunications Access Program, 4848 Southwest 21st St., Suite 201, Topeka, Kan., 66604, (785) 234-0200 tap@kstelecom.com.

Cady Lear, Hamilton Relay, 4848 Southwest 21st St., Suite 201, Topeka, Kan., 66604 (785) 228-5666, Cady.lear@hamilton-relay.com.

Rebecca Rosenthal, Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Docking State Office Building, Ninth Floor North, 915 Southwest Harrison, Topeka, Kan., 66612, (785) 246-5077, Rebecca.Rosenthal@srs.ks.gov.

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE

Thursday

12:04 a.m. – Security check at Twister's.

12:33 a.m. – Security check at B-Hive

2:08 a.m. – Caller reported criminal damage to property at 700 S. Franklin. Report filed.

5:46 a.m. – Caller reported a vehicle parked up next to yard fence. No one around vehicle; reporting party spoken to.

6:50 a.m. – Caller reported a dog on his porch at 1150 S. Franklin. Turned over to Colby Animal Clinic.

8:03 a.m. – Walk through at Heartland Christian School.

8:18 a.m. – Walk through at Colby Grade School and Colby Middle School.

11:37 a.m. – Sexual battery report filed.

12:31 p.m. – Caller reported unspent .22 rounds at curb line. Disposed of.

3:56 p.m. – Subject reported loss of camper keys.

Friday

8:18 a.m. – Caller reported theft of services at 1360 E. First Street Annex. Report filed.

8:30 a.m. – Provided 911 Program to students at Heartland Christian School.

9:08 a.m. – Caller reported two transients walking southbound on Frontage Road near Williams. Spoke to subjects at Range and Willow; all OK.

9:28 a.m. – Helped ambulance crew on call.

10:04 a.m. – Caller reported an unknown vehicle parked on street

on Hill at Maize Road. All OK, was legally parked.

10:53 a.m. – Provided information to subject on traffic stop.

12:15 p.m. – Accident at Fourth and Franklin.

2:17 p.m. – Caller reported two dogs possibly malnourished in backyard. All OK.

3:12 p.m. – Caller requested welfare check on female traveler. Not found.

3:30 p.m. – Provided information on report filed.

7:52 p.m. – Subject called 911 about missing juvenile. Subject called again, advised juvenile was back.

10:06 p.m. – Helped motorist south of the railroad tracks on Range.

11:12 p.m. – Locked restrooms at Fike Park.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF

Thursday

12:05 a.m. – Helped with traffic control on Willow north of

Bosselman's for semi that went off in ditch. Butch's contacted.

7:43 a.m. – Caller reported steer on roadway at Old U.S. 24 and County Rd. 6. Turned over to owner.

9 a.m. – Report filed for National Crime Information Center hit on incident at 4:32 Wednesday.

10:15 a.m. – Warrant arrest made.

10:35 a.m. – Warrant arrest made.

11:06 a.m. – Caller reported a semi trailer tire was starting to shred, semi heading northbound at K-25 mile 197. Spoke to driver at traffic stop at northbound K-25 mile 212.

1:39 p.m. – Driving while suspended notice to appear issued for traffic stop in the 500 block of N. French.

2:23 p.m. – Served arrest warrant for State of Colorado Board of Parole.

5:24 p.m. – Booked David J. Rosales.

5:47 p.m. – Caller reported two calves out north of Brewster.

6:55 p.m. – Civil stand-by in Brewster.

Thank You

God has blessed us with 50 years of marriage, a wonderful family, and very special friends! Thank You to our family for the celebration and to friends for helping us celebrate, and to all who sent cards or called! We appreciate everyone and everything!

Ron and Sharon Stramel



With Kansas locations to serve you in Bird City, Colby, Goodland, Oberlin, Quinter & St. Francis, and Colorado locations in Bennett and Kirk

"Neighbors Helping Neighbors"



Buying a home? Refinancing? GET WHAT YOU WANT

FIRST NATIONAL BANK HAS THE RATES AND TERMS TO FIT YOUR NEEDS

Current Fixed Mortgage Interest Rates

15 year – 3.625% (3.667% APR*)

30 year – 4.250% (4.276% APR*)

*APR and payments are based on a loan of \$100,000. Rates and fees are subject to change.

Loan To Values above 80% require mortgage insurance.

WE APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMPARE OUR INTEREST RATES AND CLOSING COSTS WITH YOU. STOP BY ANY OF OUR BRANCHES TO DISCUSS MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS.

THANK YOU

The family of Hilda M. Moellering wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the many friends and family for all the visits, cards, flowers, food, masses, memorial contributions, kind words and prayers. We especially want to thank the Sheridan County LTCU staff for the loving care you gave our Mom for the last two years.

Words cannot express our gratitude for Fr. Thomas's and Fr. Michael's comforting services. We also wish to thank the ladies of St. Josephs Church for serving the lunch.

May God bless each of you.

Families of - Ann and Clem Delzeit, Betty and Lou Grunewald, Pauline and Larry Zimmerman, Marita and Gary Schieck, Joyce and Kim Tice, Lucy and Steve Zerr


Baskets & Blossoms Now Open!

200 Center Ave. in Oakley • 785-672-8877

Now Carrying Webkinz

Stop in and see us for all of your needs! gifts • gift basket • fresh & silk floral • rentals

Come see us for those special occasions too!



the FLU

1 BAD BUG

Cost is \$25 per shot or mist.

MASS FLU CLINIC

October 5, 2011 • 3 - 6 p.m.

Thomas County 4-H Building

No appointments are necessary. You may pick up paperwork prior to the clinic at the health dept. We will be accepting cash, check, and insurance (be sure to bring a copy of your card).

For more information, please call our Flu Information Line at 785-460-4599.

Fall Festival

Winona United Methodist Church
501 Bellview Ave.

Sunday, October 2

Games, Cakewalk
Home-made Ice Cream
Farmer's Market
Country Store
Crafts and Bake Sale

Begins at 4 p.m.
Bar-B-Q with Salad
& Dessert Bar from
5 - 6:30 p.m.

Love Offering
Drawing for Gift
Basket at 6:30

Silent Auction for 1
or 2 Shetland Ponies