



Improving Family,
Resources & Health

CLOSE TO HOME

by Judy Harris

USU Extension Agent in Utah County

Utah Kids Count

We value our kids. So each year the *Kids Count Data Book* takes a look at how our kids are doing. Here are some of the most current data:

- 15% of families with children headed by single parents
- 19% of children living with parents who do not have full time year round employment
- 12% of children in poverty
- Infant mortality rate of 5.8 deaths per 1,000 live births
- 7% of teens are high school dropouts
- 6.6% low birth weight babies
- Teen birth rate 24 per 1,000 females age 15-17
- 82% immunization by age 2 (up from 77%)
- 11% illicit drug use by youth 9-12 (was 12.9%)
- Less violent crime by teens (39,106 instead of 41,353)
- 730 habitual truancies referred to court (was 1349)

Every month in Utah:

- ▣ 21 infants died before their first birthday
- ▣ 269 babies were born with low birth weight
- ▣ 16 youth ages 1-19 died as a result of an injury
- ▣ 3 children committed suicide
- ▣ 110 teens between the ages of 15-17 gave birth
- ▣ 623 substance abuse offenses were committed by juveniles under the age of 18
- ▣ 749 children were abused or neglected
- ▣ 68 teens were diagnosed with Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease
- ▣ 89,867 children lived in poverty

Earned Income Credit

A Tax Benefit for People Who Work

- If you lived with one child in 2000 and your family earned less than \$27,413, you can get up to \$2,353.
- If you lived with two or more children in 2000 and your family earned less than \$31,152 you can get up to \$3,888.
- If you had no children living with you in 2000 and you earned less than \$10,380 AND you were between ages 25 and 64, you can get up to \$353.

The Earned Income Credit (EIC) does not affect benefits such as Food Stamps, SSI, Medicaid, or public housing. In most cases, the EIC does not affect cash assistance (“welfare”) eligibility, but these rules are set by each state.



Many legal immigrants who are employed are eligible for the EIC, including green card holders, refugees, and others legally authorized to work. Getting the credit will not hurt your immigration status.

If you haven't filed a tax return in a long while, you can still get the EIC. If you were eligible you can claim the EIC for three years back.

Free help in filling out tax forms is available from VITA sites around the county: ■ Provo library on Tuesdays from 4-8 pm and Saturdays 10 am to noon; ■ BYU, room 316 of the Tanner Building, Mon-Fri 12-6; ■ UVSC, BU-124B, Saturdays 10-4; ■ Lehi library, Wednesdays 2-5; ■ American Fork Senior Citizens Center Thursdays 9-1; ■ Pleasant Grove Senior Citizen Center, Tuesdays 9-12 (785-2818); ■ Santaquin by appointment (554-5277).

If EIC does not apply to you, tell others.

Community Resources for Senior Citizens

A *free* booklet identifying resources in Utah County that seniors might find helpful can be picked up in our office.



The resources address many issues, including adult day care/respice, counseling, disability services, education, financial/legal services, food assistance, health care, home services, hospice,

housing, insurance, long-term care, medical equipment, Medicare/Medicaid, recreation, rehabilitation, support groups/care givers, transportation, utility programs, etc.

Mold follows flooding

Discard carpets and carpet padding, draperies, mattresses and box springs, and upholstered furniture that have been soaked or stored in a damp environment. These items are nearly impossible to clean and dry quickly enough to prevent mold growth. Sorry!

Walls and floors that were exposed to flood waters may have absorbed large amounts of water. It may be necessary to remove wall board and flooring materials to dry these areas out. Mold has been found growing in wet insulation months after a flood. Remove and discard wet insulation. *The insulation and the wooden studs may be wet for two or more feet above the high water level during flooding.*

Full strength bleach can be applied to hard surfaces that have obvious mold growth. The area must be kept wet with the bleach for 10 to 15 minutes to kill the mold. If surface is porous, the bleach may need to be reapplied to keep the surface wet. On other surfaces where mold spores may have settled but are not growing, dilute the bleach in water, wash the surface, and dry quickly. *During the drying time it may be necessary to use the disinfectant again as the wet wood can support mold growth.* Mold spores in the air that settle on the wet wood can germinate and develop a new colony of mold. Bleach solution only kills mold for the few minutes before the bleach evaporates. A surface will not remain mold-free with just one treatment with bleach. Sealing the wet wood with wall board or flooring material won't stop mold growth as mold does not need light to grow.

Windows are Key to Energy Management

With energy costs increasing, now is the time to think about energy-saving projects around the house, and the best place to start is with your windows.

In an otherwise well-insulated home, single pane windows account for about 35 percent of the home's energy loss. Even with storm or double windows, heat flow through windows is about ten times greater than the amount of heat loss through well-insulated walls.

But you don't have to board up your windows to save energy. There are many potential energy conserving indoor window treatments. Here are two tidbits to get you thinking. See bulletin (bottom box) for much more.

✓ **Draperies** are the most common window treatment. For these to be efficient they must be hung with a closed-top cornice, overlapped in the center, made of tight woven fabric, sealed to the wall on the sides, and the bottom should come in contact with the window sill or the floor.

✓ **Closed-top Cornice:** When an interior window is closed with draperies but not sealed at the top and bottom, warm air moves between the window treatment and the glass creating a wind tunnel effect. The warm air enters the top, cools as it falls between the glass and the window treatment and then leaves through the bottom as cold air. The closed-top cornice helps reduce these convection currents (drafts!).

Energy Efficient

Window Treatments

This bulletin in our office will help you add energy efficient window treatments to your home whether you need detailed instructions to make them yourself or whether you want to be a knowledgeable buyer of a commercial product or service. It covers advantages and disadvantages of various window treatments, energy efficient materials, and clear instructions and illustrations on making sixteen window treatments. (42 pages for \$2 at our office)

Don't miss these three!

Here are three practical and rejuvenating classes—on *using* food storage. The presenter will be Leslie Probert, who has spent years finding food storage recipes that taste great. Plus she has food storage recipes that she uses on her *busiest* days!



Class size is limited to 30 so the presenter can answer all your questions. There will be samples and handouts at each class. Since class size is limited, *please* contact us at 370-8460 x2 if you need to cancel your registration so someone on the waiting list could attend.

Food Storage for the Overwhelmed

Getting a do-able plan in hand and ideas for overcoming barriers to enjoying your food storage. Tuesday, March 27, from 7-8 p.m.*

Fast Fantastic Food Storage Fixings

Learn fast and delicious ways to use the food you already have stored. Tuesday, April 3, from 7-8 p.m..

Friendly Fuels or Cold Soup

Fuel safety (indoors and outdoors), apple box reflector oven, etc.
Tuesday, April 10, from 7-8 p.m.

*All three classes will meet in room L700 (lower level) of the County Admin. Bldg, 100 E. Center, Provo.

Cost: \$2 for one class
\$4 for two classes
\$5 for three classes

Call Judy at 370-8460 x2 if you have questions.

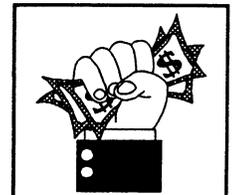
Take Charge of Your Money!

Perhaps you want to feel more confident handling your finances. Maybe money is a source of concern or conflict. Or you might be looking for ideas to share with your kids. Whatever your reason, join us for an enjoyable educational experience! (No products or companies will be promoted.)

This workshop series has information for financial well-being and peace of mind for all ages. Many different circumstances will be discussed— couples, singles, divorced, widowed.

We will meet once a week for six weeks. *Daytime* classes will be 10-11:45 a.m. in room 211 of the Historic County Courthouse, 51 S. University Avenue in Provo. *Evening* classes will be from 7-8:45 p.m. in the Pleasant Grove Senior Center, 30 East Center (enter south side of library).

The entire series costs \$15 which includes a workbook and handouts. Husband and wife can attend for the price of one.



Fee waivers are available by sending a brief letter explaining financial need to Judy Harris, USU Extension, 51 So. University Ave., Rm 206, Provo 84601. Include a phone number so you can be notified when waiver is approved.

Credit toward *Adult High School* completion is available at no additional cost (¼ to ½ credit).

GETTING STARTED: goals, record keeping. Wed., Mar 21, 10-11:45 a.m. in Provo or 7-9 p.m. in Pleasant Grove.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? net worth statement, spending leaks, reserve fund, spending plan, tracking spending. Wed., Mar 28, at 10-11:45 a.m. in Provo or 7-9 p.m. in PG.

CASH & CREDIT. banking, checking, saving, credit, debt reduction Wed., April 4, 10-11:45 a.m. in Provo or 7-9 p.m. in Pleasant Grove.

MANAGING FINANCIAL RISKS: insurance. Wed., Apr 11, 10-11:45 a.m. in Provo or 7-9 p.m. in Pleasant Grove.

INVESTING: investment alternatives, assessing the risks, varying strategies through life cycle. Wed., Apr 18, 10-11:45 a.m. in Provo or 7-9 p.m. in Pleasant Grove.

YOUR FUTURE: wills, trusts, living will, divorce, marriage Wed., Apr 25, 10-11:45 a.m. in Provo or 7-9 p.m. in Pleasant Grove.

.Call Judy at 370-8460x2 if you have questions.

Celebrate Spring with a Fluffy Bunny (cake, that is)

This cake is fun to make with the kids and no special pans are required. What you will need:

- 2 baked nine-inch round cake layers, cooled
- 5½ cups seven minute frosting
- 1½ cups (approximately) of flaked coconut
- Red food coloring
- Small pastel colored gumdrops for eyes and nose
- Red licorice lace for smiling mouth
- Black licorice laces for whiskers
- Candies to decorate the bow tie

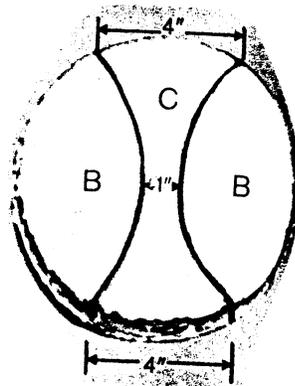
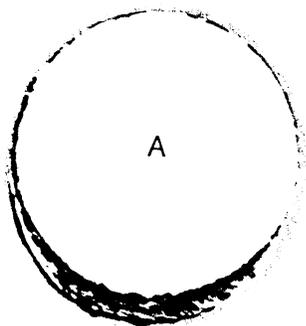
Tint ¼ cup flaked coconut with the red food coloring until the coconut is pink. Set aside. This will be used down the center of the bunny's ears.

Leave one cake layer whole for the bunny's face. Cut the other cake layer as shown. The outside pieces (B) will be the ears. The center curved piece (C) will be the bow tie.

Arrange the cake as shown, using frosting to hold pieces together.

Frost the entire cake. Sprinkle with coconut. Use pink coconut down the middle of the ears.

Decorate using gumdrops for eyes and nose, red licorice lace for smile, and black licorice laces for whiskers.

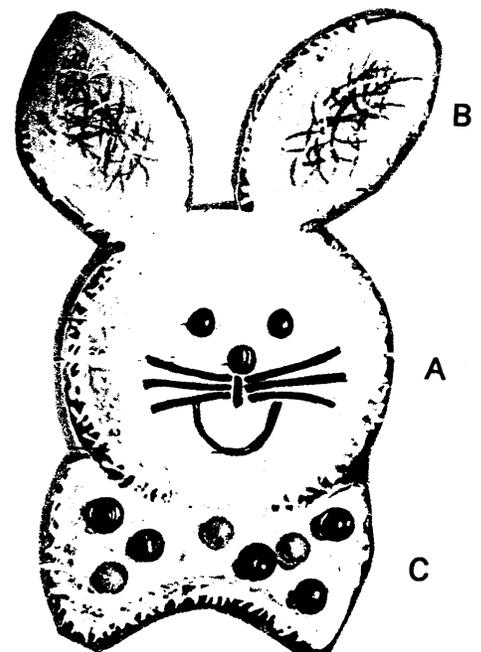


Colcannon

A traditional Irish recipe simplified for St. Patrick's Day

- 1 cabbage (about 3 pounds)
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 3 cups hot unseasoned mashed potatoes (about 1½ pounds)
- ¼ cup milk
- ⅓ cup sliced green onions
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- Chopped parsley

Remove core from cabbage. Carefully hollow out cabbage from core end, leaving a shell about 1-inch thick. Set aside cabbage removed from center. Place cabbage shell in Dutch oven; cover with boiling water (shell will float). Cover Dutch oven and cook over medium-high heat 10 to 15 minutes until crisp-tender. Meanwhile, coarsely chop the reserved cabbage. In large skillet melt butter over medium heat. Add chopped cabbage; cook and stir until crisp-tender. Stir in potatoes and milk. Add onions, salt, and nutmeg. Mix to blend thoroughly and heat through. Drain cabbage shell. Carefully place on serving plate, hollow side up. Spoon potato mixture into shell. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve hot, cut into wedges. Makes 6 servings. (Source: <http://www.recipe.com>)





Hinton Around the Yard & Garden

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER
by Adrian C. Hinton, USU -
Utah County Horticulture Agent

GREETINGS FROM THE COUNTY AGENT



We really got spoiled by last year's beautiful spring, summer and fall weather. Even though it was a bit warmer than normal, we did miss out on a late frost in the spring. This all added up to one of the longest and

most productive growing seasons in the past 20 years. We usually do have an adequate growing season, but last year we did enjoy all the apricots and the other fruits and vegetables in such great abundance.

We are at this time still below normal for our water/snow pack for the year (84% of normal). We still need more **SNOW** in the **MOUNTAINS** and hopefully old Jack Frost will give us another break this season.

If you need help with pruning fruit trees, please check the pruning class schedule in this edition of "Hinton Around." We have 9 classes scheduled at most parts of Utah County.



The class on March 3 at the County Building will hold over 100 people.

Be sure to read the Timely Tips for many suggestions to assist you with your 2001 growing season.

Adrian C. Hinton

TIMELY TIPS FOR EARLY SPRING 2001

1. Make your "final cut" on all your roses, shade and fruit trees before the sap starts to flow (especially grape vines).
2. Apply the delayed dormant oil spray mixture (oil, fungicides, insecticides) just before the blossoms open. This is the most important pest control activity for the season on all fruit trees as well as "sick" deciduous/shade trees.
3. Big changes in our County Fair for Utah County. We will still have a horticulture exhibit time and place for all 4-H'ers and adults to exhibit/show their produce and flowers. More on this in the next edition of "Hinton Around."
4. All Master Gardeners - be sure to watch your mail for information on the Mini College coming up March 23-24.
5. The 2001 Master Gardener basic course will be taught this fall (September, October, November). If you want to receive registration information please call the USU Extension office (801-370-8463) to get your name on the list. Registration information will be mailed out in June.
6. If you are interested in attending a fruit tree pruning class, please see the schedule in this edition of "Hinton Around." Look for the class nearest your area. Call the number of the host/hostess to let them know you are coming so we can have reference material for each one attending.
7. Big Home and Garden Expo for Utah County is April 27-28. Get your "free" admission ticket in this issue of "Hinton Around."
8. "Slow the Flow" - free water check of your home sprinkler system will be available this season, also in Nephi and Heber as well as Utah County. Please call this toll free number (1-877-728-3420, 1-877-SAVE H2O) to get on the schedule.
9. Check your notes on last year's garden/landscape success and order all seed/starts from the same places you did in 2000.
10. Remember - we do have a plant diagnostic lab each week, starting May 1. There is a \$1 fee for each sample. Plan to bring your sample into the lab in a closed plastic ziplock or similar container. Also please bring insect samples to be identified in a closed container. We look forward to helping you solve your plant problems this season.



GET AN EARLY START

By Paul Wilkey, Master Gardener
Horticulture Assistant

Is your green thumb starting to itch? Well, here are a few suggestions that can help you get an early start on the 2001 growing season.

Now is the time to start tubers, tuberous roots and rhizomes indoors. This will give them ample time to form healthy roots and stems for transplanting outdoors the first of May. Also this would be an ideal time to get a soil test done, especially if you haven't had one done in the last 3 years. More information is available in our Provo office.

❖ On a warmer day spend some time outside removing winter protection from your growing beds (straw, leaves, mulch, etc.) And start getting some good fertilizer on your bulbs (16-16-8 is a good mix).

❖ Start indoor planting of hardy to half-hardy annuals, biannuals and perennials, herbs, vegetable and flower seeds. Tender annuals and vegetable seeds that require 9-10 weeks can also be started indoors, and all woody plants can also be started now.

❖ This is the time also to start shade and fruit tree pruning. This is some of the hard work that really pays off.

❖ Last, but certainly not least, check out all your tools. Be sure they are clean and all cutting tools are sharp and well oiled. Digging tools should be sharp and all handles checked for breaks or cracks.

Getting this much done will give you a good head start on the season. BUT REMEMBER those back muscles have been idle for some time now. Start out slowly. Too much too fast can result in injuries that may spoil your upcoming summer. So remember to start slow, work safe, and enjoy the experience.



DIAZINON PHASE-OUT BEGINS BY SYNGENTA



Syngenta Crop Protection USA on Dec. 5, 2000, announced a four-year phase-out from its diazinon insecticide business. The company made the business decision to end its diazinon sales after a full analysis of the product's financial performance. Syngenta coordinated its planned withdrawal with the EPA, to allow for a smooth transition from the market. By working with the EPA, the company has ensured that the compound meets or exceeds the margins of safety as required by the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) during the phase-out period.

Earlier this year, Syngenta submitted a comprehensive response to EPA's Preliminary Risk Assessment of Diazinon and has presented additional studies that show wide margins of safety. "The EPA's agreement to a four-year market transition for lawn and garden use confirms the value and safety of this product and reflects the agency's conclusion that no unreasonable risk to people or the environment exists. We appreciate the EPA's recognition that a gradual removal of the product is necessary to allow adequate transition time for our customers and for consumers," said Eileen Watson of Syngenta.

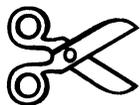
Diazinon has been marketed worldwide for more than 40 years. In the U.S. it is sold mainly to control home lawn and garden insect pests. While other manufacturers will continue to sell diazinon for agricultural uses after 2004, Syngenta will phase the product out completely. Many factors contributed to the company's decision to end diazinon sales, but the most compelling factors were economic.

The four-year strategy was chosen by the company to allow for a smooth shift from diazinon to newer chemistries. As new products are introduced, the transition from diazinon will gradually take place, and U.S. supplies of diazinon for the home and garden market are expected to be depleted by the end of 2004. People who have purchased diazinon merchandise can continue using the products until all quantities are exhausted.

"Diazinon has provided a valuable service to consumers over the past 48 years. It has helped keep homes and lawns free from nuisance and disease-carrying pests such as cockroaches, fleas, and ticks," Watson added. "Although it continues to be an effective product, we recognize that diazinon is at the end of its product life cycle."

Syngenta is one of the world's leading agribusinesses. The company began operations in November 2000 following the mergers of the Novartis and the AstraZeneca agrochemicals businesses to form Syngenta. Sales in 1999 were approximately \$7 billion. Syngenta employs more than 20,000 people in over 50 countries. Headquarters are in Basel, Switzerland.

(Syngenta, 12/5/00)



Cut out and save

Home & Garden Show
 APRIL 27 & 28 • SPANISH FORK FAIRGROUNDS
 Fri. Noon to 9 PM • Sat. 10 AM to 7 PM

VIP PASS
 Good for one free admission
 Ticket value \$3.00 each

ack

Ticket courtesy of
USU Extension Services



PRUNING, A NEARLY LOST ART

by Bill Varga, *USU Horticulture Specialist*



PRUNING, as defined by Webster:

1. To cut or trim parts of a plant or tree or
2. To remove unnecessary or unwanted parts.

This actually sounds like an art form anyone can pursue, according to Webster's definition. But - can it really be this easy?

YES, and *NO*, is the answer. The easy part is understanding:

1. That pruning is cutting and
2. That two types of cuts are used in pruning.

The two types of cuts, in order of application, are:

1. Thinning cuts and
2. Shaping cuts

Now, the art begins... It begins with the **thinning** cut. Look *WITHIN* the shrub, tree, or plant, not on the perimeter. Take out any dead wood (branches), crossing wood (branches), and selected old wood (branches). Make the cut where two branches of similar size originate. When applied properly, these cuts actually reduce the number of shaping cuts you apply next. Always use thinning cuts before shaping cuts.

Most first-time pruners shape first, which is just what **SHOULD NOT** be done. If you thin first, you reduce the total number of cuts needed and save yourself time and energy. The biggest plus is a healthy, happy plant.

Combine this pruning knowledge with an understanding of the nature (growing habits) of the particular plant you are pruning, and you begin on the trail of **pruning as an art...**

Let's begin by applying this technique to something that is fairly cut and dried, like Hybrid Tea Roses! You usually can't totally destroy this plant. Pruning techniques vary in roses from climbers, to heirlooms, to shrub roses, but you can pretty well "cookbook" the process on Hybrid Teas. (In other words, it is easy!)

First, know *WHEN* to prune. An old rule of thumb is to prune a Hybrid Tea when the Forsythia is in bloom in the spring, or about the first of April. (Never prune roses growing in cold climates until spring.)

Glove up (use a pair of tough gloves), sharpen your hand shears, or loppers. Note where the swollen bud

union at ground level is found, and begin cutting out dead, discolored branches from this basal point. These first cuts are thinning cuts. Remove any weak, spindly branches next (anything smaller than a pencil), and any branches that cross each other. Save four to six branches, separated by several inches of space. This should form an open vase shape.

Next, cut to shape at twelve to eighteen inches above ground level. You may be rewarded with an artist's glow of satisfaction come summer from following this simple, but necessary, procedure.

Don't get too gutsy about pruning everything yet! The character of other plants and how and when you apply the two types of pruning cuts can be a bit more complex. Let's take an apple tree for example.

First, one must determine the age of the tree! Pruning young trees may be started two ways, either vase shape or central leader. Then, the gardener maintains the selected form in the years to come. One must also recognize where fruitwood develops on the apple tree, and how to keep it bearing each year. This is a more difficult process, but one which still uses the same techniques first described. Thin first, then shape!!

About now you might think it would be a good idea to gather for a hands-on demonstration. Local Extension programs provide Master Gardener demonstrations on pruning at various locations, starting in late February and continuing through April.

UTAH COUNTY 2001 PRUNING DEMONSTRATIONS

FEB. 26 - Thanksgiving Point Garden Visitors Center (E. Building), Lehi - K.C. Abney, 768-4915
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

MARCH 1 - 917 East 2730 North, Provo - Julia Tuck
377-8084 4:00 p.m.

MARCH 3 - 100 East Center, Room L700 and L800, Provo - USU Extension, 370-8463 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

MARCH 5 - 10894 North 5750 West, Highland - Kevin Card, 756-5711 4:00 p.m.

MARCH 10 - 1660 North 1600 West, Mapleton - Milo Barney, 489-4735 or 226-7138 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

MARCH 12 - 1200 Westfield Road, Alpine - David & Sydney Haglund, 763-0950 9:00 a.m.

MARCH 20 - Thanksgiving Point Garden Visitors Center (E. Building), Lehi - K.C. Abney, 768-4915
Noon - 1:30 p.m.

MARCH 21 - 399 East 1100 North, Pleasant Grove - Melanie Aird, 368-4420 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

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IMPROVING WATERMELON SEED GERMINATION

Notes from Dr. Dan (The Melon Man!) Drost, USU Vegetable Specialist

I had several people contact me last year about problems with watermelon stand establishment. Two issues were raised. Some were having problems with getting Seedless Watermelon to germinate in the greenhouse. Others noted that garden emergence was erratic. The seedless melons or "triploid" types are unique and prone to poor germination and vigor. This is a result of the genetic make-up of the seed. Normal watermelons are diploid and contain two sets of chromosomes (2x). Seedless types are 3x, which causes seed sterility or the seedless characteristics. To get a triploid melon, you cross a normal 2x type with a tetraploid (4x) parent. Each parent of the cross contributes half of his or her chromosomes to the offspring. So 1x from the diploid and 2x from the tetraploid causes the seedless 3x triploid watermelon. Since it is expensive to maintain the tetraploid parent, seed costs are expensive, often costing more than \$150 per 1000 seeds.

The triploid seeds have a thicker seed coat than normal diploid watermelon seed. This creates the germination and seed vigor problems often experienced with the seedless varieties. As a result, most seedless melons are transplanted rather than direct seeded into the field. Here are some tips to help improve seedling germination and emergence. Research has shown that the thick seed coat inhibits oxygen uptake into the seed. Therefore, use a good light potting mix with good aeration properties. Do not overwater the trays during germination, as excess water will affect the aeration properties. If only a limited number of plants are needed, clip or nick the rounded end of the seed. This will increase water and oxygen uptake, which increases germination. Research has shown that higher temperatures are needed for triploids than diploids during the germination period. Germinate seeds at 85 degrees F. until 30-40 percent of the seedlings emerge, then maintain soil temperatures at 70-80 degrees F. Transplant seedlings when there are 2-3 true leaves and after soil temperatures are above 65 degrees F. Triploid transplants are slow to establish so plastic mulches and wind protection help with early season plant development.

When field seeding normal diploid watermelon, wait until soils are above 60 degrees F. or use plastics to increase soil temperatures. Watch your planting depth. Since seed size is small, planting depth should be no deeper than one inch. Soils should not be too wet. Like the triploids, oxygen levels are important to seed germination. Excess moisture will depress soil temperature as well as lower oxygen levels. Finally, planting small grain strips between the rows to decrease wind erosion and increase microclimate temperatures may be advantageous.



This newsletter is an educational effort of the Utah County office of Utah State University Extension, 51 So. University Ave., Room 206, Provo, UT 84601.

The phone number for USU Extension is 370-8460. If you do not have a touch tone phone, stay on the line and the receptionist will help you. With a touch tone phone, at the greeting press the number of the desired subject area:

- 5) garden, yard, trees, insects
- 2) food, finances, clothing, housing
- 3) pastures, field crops, dairies
- 4) 4-H and youth

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