

NEWS RELEASE  
Gregg Eyestone  
110 Courthouse Plaza  
Manhattan, KS 66502-0111

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Phone: 785-537-6350  
FAX: 785-537-6353

## The Gifts of Plants

It is the season of gifts. Both in giving and receiving. Let us focus for a moment on receiving. Horticulture benefits the wealth and health of every citizen and every community. Here are just a few of the gifts we receive from plants.

Gardening connects us with nature that will restore our spirits and make us feel good about ourselves. Working with plants tends to divert one's attention from other trials and tribulations of life are particularly important this past year. It affords people the opportunity to achieve a level of serenity and enjoyment that often escapes us in our technologically based society.

A mature leafy tree generates as much oxygen in a single season as ten people inhale in a year. Plants purify the air, remove pollutants which are both seen and unseen. One hundred trees can remove two tons of carbon dioxide from the air annually.

Trees and other plants reduce storm water damage to the community. They absorb and recycle water into the atmosphere through transpiration. One large tree can capture and filter up to 36,500 gallons of water per year. That one tree can absorb 36 percent of the rainfall per event. Plants anchor the soil and filter out pollutants, giving us clean water.

Eating fresh vegetables and fruits is known to be important for good health. Some suggest it slows the aging process. The availability of fresh produce from the garden is conducive to maintaining good dietary habits.

The National Gardening Association estimates that a well-maintained vegetable garden yields an average return of \$500 per year.

Our homes represent 25% of our personal wealth. Well-landscaped homes are more valuable. A 25-foot tree reduces annual heating and cooling costs for typical homes by 8-12%.

After opening your wrapped gifts this year, give thanks to the plants around you that share their gifts each and every day.

If you would like additional information on a horticulture topic, please contact Gregg Eyestone at the Riley County office of K-State Extension. Gregg may be contacted by calling 537-6350 or stopping by 110 Courthouse Plaza in Manhattan or e-mail: [geyeston@ksu.edu](mailto:geyeston@ksu.edu) and at [www.riley.ksu.edu](http://www.riley.ksu.edu)

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