

The year was 1953. Dwight D. Eisenhower was inaugurated as the thirty-fourth President of the United States. TV Guide first appeared on newsstands. Sir Edmund Hillary conquered Mount Everest, and Mickey Mantle hit his first home run for the season, a 565-foot homer in Washington, D.C.'s Griffith Stadium. The movie *Shane*, destined to become a classic western, was showing in theaters across America, and Chevrolet rolled off a special assembly line its first fiberglass Corvette, America's premier sports car.



Also, in 1953, the University of Nebraska piloted a new weekly television series called *Backyard Farmer*. In April of 2013, *Backyard Farmer* launched its first show for the season celebrating sixty years. Today, *Backyard Farmer* continues to hold the title as the nation's longest running locally produced television series, and it's still growing.

Both the set and the staff have changed over the years, but one thing remains constant. Nebraska University Cooperative Extension experts still answer viewer's questions about everything from asters to zinnias and from bugs to bunnies. The advice comes from a rotating team of extension experts.

Fortunately, with the advent of the computer and related technology, the *Backyard Farmer* program has taken on a new look over the years. The entire program is now video streamed on the *Backyard Farmer* web site: www.byf.unl.edu This is the same site viewers should visit to E-mail their lawn and garden questions. Viewers can also view previous shows and access a searchable video database for topics discussed on archived *Backyard Farmer* programs.

If you've been gardening for any length of time, chances are you not only subscribe to an assortment of gardening magazines and journals, but you also have become a dedicated viewer of *Backyard Farmer*. Years before I began working for Extension, I became and remain to this day a devoted fan of this outstanding gardening television program. Each year when September rolls around, I am saddened just knowing that *Backyard Farmer* will go off the air and not return until the following spring.

Guess what? I have exciting news. *Backyard Farmer* has begun to produce an E-Newsletter to help keep you in the garden while they are off the air. You are invited to join their mailing list. If interested in receiving *Backyard Farmer*'s E-Newsletters, go to the *Backyard Farmer* website at www.byf.unl.edu/ Once you've opened the document, click on the 'Sign up For Our Email Newsletter' icon on the right side of the page.

Each monthly newsletter features many interesting topics: insects, turf and weeds, rots and spots, critters, and the *Backyard Farmer* garden. The newsletter also spotlights a particular plant. Also featured are links to UNL Extension, NET, Dept. of Agronomy and Horticulture, Dept. of Entomology, Dept. of Pesticide Education, Dept. of Pathology, UNL Gardens, School of Natural Resources, Nebraska Forrest Service, Nebraska Game and Parks and Extension Neb Guides.

By the way, once you've enrolled to receive the E-Newsletter and have opened your first edition for 2013, you might want to take the survey. Here is your chance to win a *Backyard Farmer* T-shirt. From that point on, watch for the E-Newsletter monthly until *Backyard Farmer* is once again on the air. It will return the first week in April. As a reminder, don't forget to add byf@unl.edu to your address book, so the newsletter will land in your inbox.

The year is 2013. Sixty years later, and Backyard Farmer is still growing strong.