

Perspective

Take the Summer Off!

Lawns: imagine the conversation the master landscaper might have with an Extension Specialist on the subject.

Master Landscaper:

Jane, you know all about gardens and nature.

What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I help grow?

I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan.

Those plants grow in any type of soil,

Withstand drought

And multiply with abandon.

The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies

Honey bees and flocks of songbirds.

I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now.

But all I see are these green rectangles.

Extension Specialist:

It's the home owners that live there, Frank.

The Suburbanites.

They call the flowers "weeds" and go to great lengths to kill

Them and replace them with grass.

Master Landscaper:

Grass?

But it's so boring.

It's not colorful.

It doesn't attract butterflies,

Birds and bees,

Only grubs and sod worms.

It's temperamental with temperatures.

Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

Extension Specialist:

Apparently so, Frank.

They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green.

They begin each spring by fertilizing grass

And poisoning other plants that crop up in the lawn.

Master Landscaper:

The spring rains and warm weather makes grass grow really fast.

That must make the homeowners happy.

Extension Specialist:

Apparently not, Frank.

As soon as it grows a little,

They cut it...sometimes twice a week!

Master Landscaper:

Cut it

So the then bail it like hay for the animals?

Extension Specialist:

Not exactly, Frank.

Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

Master Landscaper:

The bag it?

Why?

Is it a cash crop?

Do they sell it?

Extension Specialist:

No sir.

Just the opposite.

They pay to throw it away.

Master Landscaper:

Now let me get this straight.

They fertilize grass so it will grow,

They cut it off and pay to throw it away?

Extension Specialist:

Yes, Sir.

Master Landscaper:

They must be relieved in the summer

When the rain stops and it gets hot.

That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

Extension Specialist:

You won't believe this Frank.

When the grass stops growing so fast,

They drag out hoses and pay more money to water it

So they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

Master Landscaper:

What nonsense.

At least they kept some of the trees.

That was a sheer stroke of genius,

If I do say so myself.

The trees grow leave in the spring

To provide beauty and shade in the summer.

In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket

To keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes.
Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil.
It's a natural circle of life.

Extension Specialist:

You better sit down Frank.

The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle.

As soon as the leaves fall,

They rake them into great piles and pay for them to be hauled away.

Master Landscaper:

No.

What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter

And to keep the soil moist and loose?

Extension Specialist:

After throwing away the leaves,

They go out and buy something which they call mulch.

They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

Master Landscaper:

And where do they get this mulch?

Extension Specialist:

They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

Master Landscaper:

Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore.

Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the classroom Administrator, you're in charge of the arts.

What movie have they scheduled for us tonight?

KS Foundation for Ag in the classroom Administrator:

Dumb and Dumber, Frank.

It's this real stupid movie about.....

Master Landscaper:

Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from our Extension Specialist.

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