

If you don't have the gift, gardening is a waste of time

Kathy Hedberg/Lewiston Tribune

I have often wondered whether there is any scientific proof that some people actually have what has been termed "a green thumb."

It certainly seems that some people are blessed with the ability to grow about anything about anywhere, while others of us, as in yours truly, have been threatened with legal action for cultivating what are known as "noxious weeds." How was I to know that pretty purple flower in my garden had the potential of taking over the planet? That guy I met in the back alley who sold the seeds to me never mentioned anything about that.

And once it was pointed out I was growing an illegal plant I was perfectly willing to pull it out. I think dangling the 90-day jail sentence over my head was a little excessive. But then again, time in the penitentiary would have given me a good chance to catch up on my reading. Gardening books, of course.

Whenever we get to this point in the growing season and I see the abundance of other people's gardens while I am still trying to coax a puny carrot out of mine, I start feeling resentful.

My perennial excuses - the weather's too hot; the weather's too cold; my ground is too rocky; you just can't grow things at this elevation - don't stand up when people who live up on top of the mountain at the edge of the snow line who plant their gardens in gravel pits haul out truck loads of vegetables. I'm thinking there must be some powerful chemicals involved for that kind of pay off.

My sister is one who seems to have been blessed with the green thumb gene.

I'm astonished at the rich bounty she collects out of her garden every year compared to my haul that could fit into a child's sand bucket.

Weren't we born of the same parents? Didn't we have the same last name growing up? Weren't my teachers her teachers later on, and so forth.

So how is it she is the Pied Piper of plants, while I'm the Wicked Witch of the West?

What really hurts is when she says: "Oh, I wasn't even going to plant a garden this year. This stuff (she motions across her bountiful field) just came up from some leftover seeds from last year that I threw out."

Some say there might be a little sibling rivalry going on here, but I deny that I'm jealous of my sister because she is such a good gardener.

I'm jealous of everybody who's a good gardener.

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