

Yield Fantastic — in Seed Catalogs!

While we are enduring the inconveniences, discomforts, confinement and extra expenses of a hard winter, there is one bright ray of hope. According to the calendar and almanac, spring is just a month away!

When it comes, spring probably will burst through overnight with balmy breezes and welcome sunshine that will stir our latent impulses into energetic urges to get things planted and growing.

Chances are a lot of us may suddenly discover that we are weeks behind with our work by the time we start and that reading or watching TV are poor ways to condition our muscles. With snow on the ground and frigid winds blowing, it's easy to postpone garden chores.

Well, there's no hurry yet! It might snow again. Pull up a chair and look at the seed catalogs. This season's crop of catalogs is prolific and if our gardens thrive half as well as these imaginative "dream books," a large part of our food problems will be solved.

This is where plants always are lush and hardy, spectacular blossoms spread in mammoth arrays of color, fruit trees yield abundantly and eye-appealing vegetables are shown to stimulate any appetite.

Yard long beans may be matched by yard long cucumbers. If you want to simplify your work and save space, order "Toperatoes," which are said to produce tomatoes, peppers and potatoes on the same plants.

Colorful pictures of flowers stir the imagination, too, such as the Hindu rope plant, giant carnations and miniature roses, hybrid petunias, pompon zinnias, exotic dahlias and tetraploid daylilies.

Kits are available for light gardens, window greenhouses and cold frames.

Descriptions of ready-made bins extol the value of compost to condition the soil but don't mention the scooping and hauling. Fertilizer pellets are handier to use, but they figure out to cost several hundred dollars a ton, which is pretty high for

plant food.

But fireside dreaming of what might be produced from a seed catalog won't get the job done. Spring is near and work is needed.

Certainly, mail order seed companies want their customers to succeed and they provide helpful practical suggestions. But in none of the catalogs are you likely to find the word "work". That's the marvelous ingredient that produces beautiful flowers and vegetables.

It might be a little late to order seeds or plants from out-of-state distributors, anyway. Probably the best thing to do now is to look elsewhere in this newspaper for local nursery ads and go there to select varieties adapted to this area. You probably will find seeds from firms that send out catalogs on sale there, too.

Glamorous descriptions such as those set forth in the dream books may be missing, but the hope and expectation of flowers and fruit are there. It's time to get busy! Spring is almost here!