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## Lawn Fertilization

If you have a lawn, spring is the time to start thinking of fertilization. The following is a guideline on fertilization for Connecticut. This takes in to account a good, well drained organic soil with a pH of 6.0-6.5. Please note: the more you fertilize and water, the more insect and disease problems you will have.

Here are 6 different approaches to lawn fertilization:

1. **Natural:**No fertilization
2. **Low:**Fertilized once in late November
3. **Low-Medium:**Fertilized once in late Nov and again in late March/early April
4. **Medium:**Fertilized 3 times with applied weed control: March, mid-May, Nov.
5. **High:**Fertilized 4 times with applied weed control: March, mid-May, late August, Nov.
6. **Ultra-High:**Fertilized 5 times with applied weed control (requires additional watering): March, mid-May, early July, late August, Nov.

I recommend the medium approach #4. The type of fertilizer you use, organic vs. inorganic, is your choice. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium remain the same in spite of the source. You should try to apply approximately 1 lb. of nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. of area (**example 1**).

- Example 1:** Fertilizer Analysis 28-3-3
1. The First number 28 is the percentage of nitrogen in the bag.
  2. In a 50 lb bag of fertilizer you will have 14 lb. of nitrogen (28% of 50 lb). This bag would cover approx. 14,000+ sq. ft. of area (140ft.x100ft.)

When selecting a spring fertilizer, look at the analysis and try to select one showing 25%-50% of the nitrogen source as slow release. If you are using a 100% organic form the nitrogen is normally all slow release. The nitrogen will cause the grass plants to have lush top growth and a green color. Some fertilizers provide chelated iron which

will promote a deep green color. When controlling weeds, the most important practice is mowing height. Mow at 2.5"-3.5"; this length will shade out weeds and promote aggressive, healthy turf. Remember, these recommendations (**Example 2**) are for Connecticut and will not match general instructions. **Example 2** is for a 14,000 sq. ft. lawn with an average healthy soil, average pH and rainfall with shade to sun. Changing the fertilizer analysis would change the amount of fertilizer used.

**Example 2:** Late March – Early April: 50 lb - 28-3-3 50% SCU\*, 1.5% iron  
(ground not frozen) Frequent springs rains require a higher percentage of slow release nitrogen.

Mid May: 75 lb - 19-0-6 25% SCU\*, .103 Dimension  
(Soil temp +/- 65 degrees) Dimension controls crabgrass germination. Applying crabgrass control now prevents germination in August and September (when the problem is worse).

Late November: 100 lb - 11-23-10 25% SCU\*. These nutrients  
(ground not frozen) promote root growth.

\* SCU = Sulfur Coated Urea (slow release form of nitrogen)

Working with example 2 time table will yield acceptable turf with few weeds and require moderate maintenance with few problems.

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