



New Lawn Recommendations

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You have just finished installing your new lawn. The seeds establishment will depend on how well you care for and maintain the germinating plants.

While the grass seed is germinating it needs sufficient amounts of soil moisture. Germination cannot be interrupted or the young plants will die. To check the soil moisture scratch the surface of the soil. If the soil just beneath the surface is brown and moist there is no need to water. If the soil is dry and dusty you should water for 1-2 hours or until the soil is moistened to a depth of 6-8 inches. The soil should be checked daily if it has not rained for 3-4 days. Watering should be done in the morning or early evening, avoiding midday.

Once the grass begins to grow you will start mowing. First make sure the mower blade(s) is sharp. Next check the mowing height, for most home lawns (comprised of Kentucky Bluegrass, Chewings Fescue and perennials Ryegrass) it is 2.5"-3". The homeowner should not let the lawn grow more than 5.0 inches (remove no-more than 30%-40% of the blade). Lastly, do not remove the clippings unless they are smothering. The clippings add organic matter and help return nutrients to the soil.

Fertilization is important in establishing the seedling's roots. A strong root system will prevent erosion, improve wear and recuperation, and promote a healthier looking lawn. Use a fertilizer that has at least 30%-50% of the nitrogen source in an organic or relatively insoluble form.

As soon as the grass begins to grow in March-April apply 3.5lb/1000sf of 28-3-10 50%SCU. Next apply 3.5lb/1000sf of 28-3-10 50%SCU in Mid June-early July. Then apply 3.5lb/1000sf of 28-3-10 50%SCU in late August- early September. Finally 6.5lb/1000sf of 15-30-15 30%SCU in late November or when the grass stops growing.

If your lawn was planted in the spring follow the recommendations for June, September and November. If your lawn was planted in the fall follow the recommendations for November and the following year go with the March, June & August applications.

When using a drop spreader try to slightly overlap your passes. If you miss areas the lawn will have lights and dark stripes. This problem can be avoided if you use a cyclone type spreader. Be careful to apply the recommended amounts as too much fertilizer can burn a lawn.

The lawn must be fertilized to assure proper establishment. If not, the hay that has been used as mulch will tie up nitrogen for its microbial decomposition. This will result in a weak weed infested lawn.

Acer Gardens has handouts covering topics on established lawn care, tree and shrub fertilization and many other subjects.