

# Lawn Care

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## WHY SEED LAWNS IN THE FALL?

**H**ABITS are hard to break even when it comes to lawn making. In the face of evidence to the effect that fall is the proper time of year to seed a lawn, 70% still choose spring. Within the past ten years, however, **LAWN CARE** readers have been turning to fall largely because they have had an opportunity themselves to compare spring and fall seeding results.

By actual results, authorities and practical minded lawn enthusiasts claim that every hour of effort spent on a lawn in the fall is worth three spent in spring.

### Experiments Favor September

In practically all experiments, the best turf has been produced from early September sowing and, strange as it may seem, winter seedings have compared very favorably with those made earlier in the season. Of course, grass from September sowings gets a good start before freezing weather while the winter seedings do not germinate until the following spring. But even so, the turf will develop much more rapidly than if planting had been delayed until spring. Winter or dormant seeding is especially suggested where building operations delay the planting of a new lawn. Caretakers of football fields also find dormant seeding advantageous.

### Four Reasons for Fall Seeding

The advantages of fall seeding are as follows:

First.—The weather is more favorable than in the spring. Cool nights, adequate rainfall and good warm soil

combine to establish an ideal growing condition. New grass finds such a situation conducive to a slow, normal growth.

Second.—Fall sown grasses root more deeply. It is Nature's precaution against the rigors of winter. The roots from fall sowing branch or stool out, thus tending to form a thicker, healthier sod. From spring seeding, grass is inclined to a lush top-heavy growth, whereas in the fall the growing emphasis is more upon root development. Spring seeded grass grows so rapidly that only a weak root system develops. Such roots are unable to get down to the reserve soil moisture and food supply.

Third.—Fall is a dormant period for weeds. They enter upon a season of inactivity which is just the time for new grass to take possession of every available inch of lawn area. When spring comes with its luxuriant weed growth, the new grass from fall seeding will have become firmly established and will be in good fighting fettle.

Fourth.—If a new lawn is being started, the soil is readily workable in the fall, while in the spring it is usually too wet to be broken up and put into proper seeding condition. Moreover, in the spring the soil is too cold for seed to germinate readily, while in the fall, as already explained, the stored-up heat from a summer's sun insures quick and maximum growth.

### Repairing Summer Injury

The damage wrought to established grass by heat, drouth, disease and insects

during the summer may be repaired most advantageously in the autumn. When lawn surfaces are uneven, it is well to level them with topdressing of compost or good topsoil. Depressions in a lawn should be corrected in this way and not by heavy rolling. Fresh soil for topdressing is more easily handled in the fall season because it is less apt to be wet and sticky as in the spring. Weed seeds that will be in the new soil will have less chance to sprout at this time of year. Topdressing low spots should be done just previous to applying grass food and sowing seed.

### Using Fertilizer

Autumn days are not only ideal for sowing grass seed but are also favorable for feeding established lawns. Because the soil is warm, it aids in the reaction of the grass food to improve soil fertility. Heavy rains are not likely to wash the nutrients beyond the reach of the roots before the grass has had a chance to absorb them. Since weeds are dormant and grass is entering another period of activity, a lawn fertilizer is not wasted on hungry weeds but is completely utilized by the grass.

It is of prime importance to provide a new planting with a liberal supply of the right grass food to encourage quick and sturdy turf development. The fertilizer should be applied to the surface and raked into the upper 2 or 3 inches. It is then possible to sow seed immediately afterward without harm.

### Time of Seeding

The real enemies of grass are extreme heat, drouth and weeds. Fall sown grass is better able to withstand these because it gets a head start of several months.

The proper seeding period is between mid-August and late October, depend-

ing upon the climate. November or December seeding is justified if a new lawn cannot be made ready for sowing before that date. Grass from such a seeding will start as soon as the ground warms up the following spring. Winter weather does not injure seed which has not had an opportunity to sprout before cold temperatures arrive. The grass is certain to develop ahead of that planted in the spring, since the latter must not be sown until the ground dries sufficiently to work. Too often such a period does not come until near the season of hot, dry weather.

## Yellow Jacket Exterminator Devised by Physician

"Lawns and their care have consumed much of my open time and energy in recent years, and here is an experience which may be of interest to some of your readers, especially those who live in the country.

"The sickle or lawn mower has ceased to operate and the operator has left the scene most hastily. It was caused by yellow jackets. They are little fellows that live in the ground and have a powerful resistance for their size. Did you ever meet such a pest? We have, almost every summer.

"Here is a hundred percent remedy: Drive a stake near the entrance, so it can be located after dark, then bide your time. Look up an old piece of fly screen wire eight inches square, and with the help of a flashlight, place it squarely on the entrance to the nest. Pour into this through your screen a teacup of gasoline, and out they come under the screen. A match completes the treatment."—Dr. S. D. Ruggles, Portsmouth, Ohio.

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