

Lawn Care

T.M. REG
PUBLISHED FIVE TIMES YEARLY FOR LAWNTHUSIASTS

FALL SEEDING COSTS LESS

When the right seed is selected for fall planting, a lower rate of seeding will produce equal or better turf than a much heavier rate of spring seeding.

Why? Because the cultural loss from fall planting is less. The seed lodges in warm soil which is likely to have good moisture conditions for germination. Shorter days and cool nights favor greater root development of the seedling. There is less weed competition—all in all a better chance for each seed to produce a mature plant.

Based on tests it seems obvious that with average soil conditions, a planting of 4 pounds of good seed per 1000 sq ft in the fall will produce thicker and better turf than 6 to 8 pounds in the spring. This can add up to a substantial saving on a moderately large lawn.

The fall seeding season extends later than most folks realize. While earlier seeding produces turf to be enjoyed in the fall, it is all right to proceed with

lawn planting just as late as the soil can be worked whether October or November.

What is the right seed for fall planting? (1) It must be composed of perennial varieties that will not winterkill. (2) The seed should be of properly cured and thoroughly re-cleaned quality, free of bulky chaff and coarse varieties.

This kind of seed can be planted sparingly. Most folks plant two or three times as much as they should. This is not only wasteful—it is harmful. The grass comes up too thick—it is as unhealthy to try growing too many grass plants on a given area as to have too many people in a stuffy room.

Folks often have the idea they should sow heavily because "the soil is poor." That is not true. Poorer soils will not support an excessive number of plants any better than a few. Liberal use of grass food before sowing will help but extra heavy seeding—never!

A good place to invest part of the saving in using less seed is in lawn food. This will help the new seedlings get off to a better start, insuring quicker coverage, more vigorous growth and a uniform stand of new grass seedlings.

How to sow less seed. If it is to be hand broadcast, mix with an equal bulk of sand, screened soil, vermiculite or other inert material. Or, punch holes in the lid of a coffee can or metal lid of a glass jar. Use an 8 penny nail,



driving through from the inside of the lid. Put seed in the can or jar, fasten lid securely and you have a shaker arrangement for light seeding.

Better still use a precision spreader that is capable of sowing as little as 2 pounds per 1000 sq ft evenly and accurately. The savings in seed will soon pay for the spreader.

Preparing the ground for seeding.

If a new lawn, ask for LAWN CARE Digest Chapters 1 through 4. In brief the final steps involve firming and leveling the area with alternate use of the rake and roller. Apply lawn food. Scratch surface lightly with rake to provide slightly roughened surface for seeding. Sow seed, dividing the amount in half. Sow one-half in one line of direction, say, east and west, then the other half cross-wise to the first. This should insure more even coverage, fewer missed places. The advice applies particularly to hand sowing but it's good practice with spreader sowing too. Follow seeding with a light rolling, just enough to firm soil around the seed. If possible keep surface soil constantly moist until grass is well started.

Renovating an Old Lawn. Cut lawn closely, catching the clippings, or better still, remove by raking or with a lawn sweeper. Apply lawn food. If there are sizeable bare spots, scarify them with a flat spade or scraper so the surface half inch or so is loose to receive seed. If some spots are extra hard, as for example, trampled places, perforate with spading fork.

Sow seed, dividing in half as suggested above. Keep lawn mowed as long as grass is growing so old grass will not smother new. Keep leaves off, in particular don't let them mat down on the lawn.

Winter Lawns In the South

The northern varieties of grass like warm sunny climes in the winter months, just like many tourists. These grasses will stay green as long as temperatures don't go below 20 for protracted periods.



Native southern grasses usually turn brown after frost. Even these grasses will stay green longer if regularly fed with lawn food, including a fall application. The yellow or moth-eaten appearance of many lawns is due to lack of food more than any other cause. Water may also be needed in the earlier part of the winter.

Southern lawns can be green all winter if northern grass varieties are seeded into them. The proper procedure is to cut the lawn short, apply lawn food, sow the seed. Better results will follow if the lawn is top-dressed with screened soil before the seed is sown. The seed should then be raked or brushed into the soil with a rolling afterwards. Keeping the surface moist will hasten germination and seedling growth. It has been noted that there are many southern sections where northern grasses become more or less permanently established and will, with a little assistance, take over the lawn each winter as the southern grasses go dormant.

Winter Protection Of No Value to Lawns

It is the hot summer months that are hard on lawns, not winter. Nature has endowed perennial grasses with the

stamina to hibernate in cold weather, even young plants will tolerate sub-zero conditions if there are no complicating factors such as traffic over the lawn or severe heaving of the soil.

A winter covering of straw, leaves, manure or similar materials will actually harm grass by smothering it, excluding needed oxygen from the grass roots. Particularly harmful are clumps of leaves that press down patches of grass, the whole mass freezing to the ground.



More and more folks are finding it worth while to invest in a lawn sweeper. The typical machine is an arrangement of revolving brushes mounted between two wheels. A wire-frame canvas catcher is provided into which leaves and other debris are swept by the revolving brushes.

These lawn implements are handy in other than the fall season. On a large lawn, time may be saved if the catcher is not used in mowing. Instead the clippings may be quickly picked up with the sweeper. There is less bulk to dispose of after the clippings have dried for a day.

Weather Again Cuts Seed Harvests

No one thought it could happen again but it did.

Last year the stage seemed to be set in the spring for bumper seed harvests. But the weather turned bad with damaging late freezes in May and too much rain at harvest time.

This year a repeat performance except instead of cold weather in May, the early part was hot and dry. Later, when such weather was needed for harvesting, excessive rains were the rule.

The price blow was softened somewhat last year by a normal carry over of seed. This year there was practically none. A peculiar thing is that when growing conditions are good for hay and grain crops, they are not good for grass seed production and harvesting.

Do Not Buy Humus From Itinerant Peddlers

LAWN CARE has published stories year after year telling how home owners are mulcted of from \$100 to \$500 by smooth talking operators who promise lawn miracles with a few baskets of black magic.

They come around with a truckload of rich-looking stuff they call humus and offer to put it on at what seems a low price. At best it is worthless worn-out muck. It may be toxic or polluted with weed seeds. Shun these sharpsters. Their tricks put the old time medicine man to shame. He got a dollar for a bit of colored water. They get hundreds of dollars for something of less value.

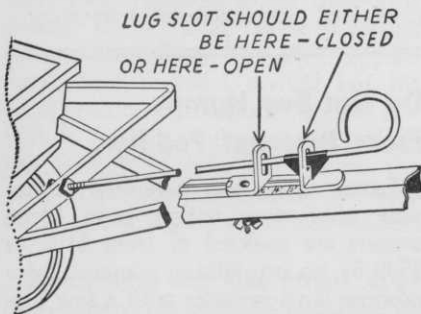
One victim's story:

These men called and sold me the dirt at \$1.50 a bushel. Of course my actions were exactly as described in your "Pay Dirt"

article but I had not read Lawn Care until AFTER the experience. As the men were scattering the dirt I went into the house. A neighbor called and told me I had better go out and check and see how much I owed them before they put more dirt on the lawn, as she had been greatly shocked over her debt. I did this and they claimed 250 bushels. The arguments began. I gave them two checks, one for the day of work and a post-dated one, August 2nd, on which I stopped payment but the bank paid it anyhow. Well, I have long whiskers on that type of salesmanship at least.

Check Your Spreader

A properly assembled Scotts Spreader makes accurate application of seed, lawn food or weed control. A quick way to verify the assembly is to check whether the notch in the lug on the control rod engages readily in the stationary bracket.



If it pulls clear through, the Spreader will apply too much material. If the lug cannot be pulled back to easily engage in the bracket, then it is too lean and it will not stay in closed position.

If either difficulty exists, it may be easily corrected by adjusting the two nuts at the end of the control rod, turning up if the lug pulls through (i. e.,

shortening the rod) or down if the lug does not pull back far enough to engage the bracket.

When set at scale mark 10, a Scotts Spreader should be half open at the bottom of the hopper, the openings being $\frac{1}{4}$ inch by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

When using the Spreader some folks make the mistake of not shutting it off as they turn it around. This results in serious overdosage at such points, causing waste or even injury if fertilizer and weed controls are being applied.

Prescribed setting rates are for a normal brisk walk. If the operator's pace is definitely slow, then the Spreader should be set one number lower than called for in the directions.

The directions in each package of a Scotts product carry the specific Spreader setting number. It is wise to take a moment to refer to these and not trust to memory in selecting the scale number.

The Spreader will last longer if it is washed thoroughly after use, then dried and oiled. Stand the Spreader on one wheel, apply oil so it flows between the wheel hub and axle. Do this from inside the hopper too. Then repeat on other wheel.

Grass that is relatively short will green up earlier in the spring—all things being equal. This process can be hastened by applying lawn food on dormant grass in late winter.

Lawns sloping toward the south will revive earlier in the spring than those facing north or even east. This is due to the fact that the sun's rays exert a greater warming effect on southern slopes.

O M SCOTT & SONS CO.

Scotts

MARYSVILLE - - OHIO