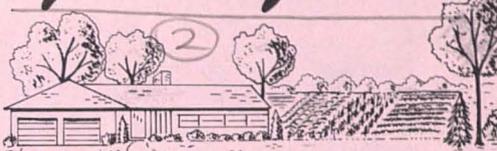


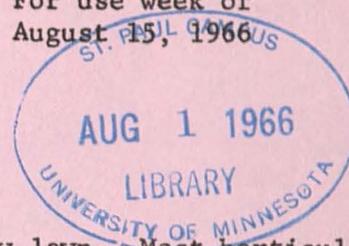
# Yard 'n' Garden



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STARTING A NEW LAWN

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Many homeowners ask when is the best time to start a new lawn. Most horticulturists agree that August 15 to September 10 is one of the better times for seeding a new lawn. During this season of the year, there is less weed competition and usually we can depend on fall rains to help germinate the seed. Sodding can be done throughout the fall season.

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Thorough soil preparation is especially important before starting the new lawn, Once the sod is laid or seed is sown, there is little that can be done to improve the basic soil.

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Here are a few suggestions for soil preparation. First of all, if the soil is low in organic matter, if it is heavy clay or sandy, organic matter should be added. The source of organic matter might include barnyard manure, compost or commercial peat. The organic matter should be worked into the upper 6-inch layer of the soil surface.

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Along with the organic matter add 20 to 30 pounds of a 10-10-10 fertilizer for 1,000 square feet of area. Most Minnesota soils do not need lime. However, if you are in an area where the soil tends to be acid, a soil test may be helpful before seeding or sodding. Your county agricultural agent can assist you with the soil test.

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Use a good quality grass seed. Be sure the mixture has a high percentage of perennial grasses such as Kentucky bluegrass and a creeping red fescue. The Kentucky bluegrass is recommended for the heavier soils, whereas the fescue grasses are recommended for the lighter soils or for shady conditions.

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Grass seed should be sown on a firm seed bed. If the soil is very soft or fluffy it is difficult to maintain a level surface. This is also true where sod is to be laid.

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When the grass is growing, mowing should begin. Usually you should start mowing when the grass is about 3 inches in height.