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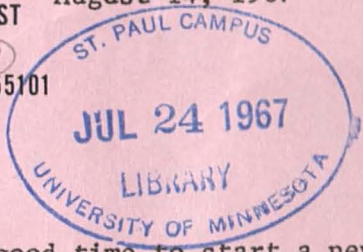
3 Yard 'n' Garden



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1 FALL LAWN CARE

Sometime between August to early September is a good time to start a new lawn or to renovate an old one.

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Where the grass is thin or uneven or shows signs of low fertility, a soil test might be very beneficial. Soil testing service is maintained through the University of Minnesota. If you wish to have your lawn soil tested, contact your local county agricultural agent for instructions on taking the sample as well as the mailing of the soil to test.

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If you are starting a new lawn this fall, the best time to seed is between August 15 and September 10. Sodding can continue well into the fall.

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Whether you are seeding or sodding, it is necessary to prepare the soil thoroughly. The first step is to add organic matter to the sandy soils as well as to the heavy clay soils. A good source of organic matter might include barnyard manure, compost or commercial peat. Work the organic matter into the upper 6-inch layer of the soil.

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Add 40 to 50 pounds of complete fertilizer such as a 10-10-10 analysis for each 1,000 square feet of area. Most Minnesota soils do not need lime. However, if soil in your area tends to be acid, you may want to use the soils test as a guide.

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Use a quality grass seed for your lawn. For the heavy soils in lawns which are in full sun the Kentucky bluegrasses are best. But if the soil tends to be a lighter texture and shade prevails, plant creeping red fescue. For heavier soils, use a mixture containing 60 to 70 percent Kentucky bluegrass and 30 to 40 percent of the creeping red fescue. For sandier soils and shade, use 60 to 70 percent of creeping red fescue and 30 to 40 percent of Kentucky bluegrasses.

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Sow grass seed on a firm seed bed. If the soil is very loose, a light rolling may be necessary prior to seeding. The same would be true if sod were to be laid. When the grass is growing by the end of September, make the first application of a complete fertilizer.

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Begin mowing when the grass is about 3 inches tall.

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