

mn 2000 46 4/15/68

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and Agricultural Journalism
Institute of Agriculture
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

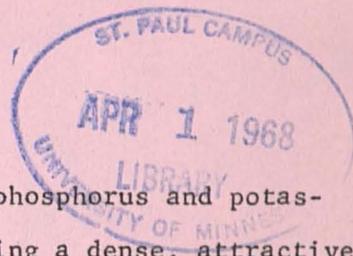
Yard 'n' Garden ³



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Prepared and distributed
by the Minnesota Agricultural
Extension Service

For use week of
April 15, 1968



FERTILIZING THE HOME LAWN

A healthy lawn requires large amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Nitrogen is the most important element in developing a dense, attractive turf, and most lawns are deficient in nitrogen unless they're fertilized regularly. This lack of nitrogen causes slow growth, narrow leaves and a light yellow-green color.

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Every lawn should receive 2 to 4 pounds of nitrogen per year. Two applications should be made, one in early spring and one between mid-August and mid-September. Apply no more than 2 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet at one application. Each application should be divided in half and each half spread on the lawn in a different direction with a fertilizer spreader to get even distribution.

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If possible, take a soil test to determine recommended rates of phosphorus, potassium, and lime. On established lawns, lime should be applied early in the spring or late in fall when grass is dormant. But lime is best applied before seeding so it can be mixed in the soil.

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The method of fertilizer application is as important as the grade used. Uneven color and growth result when the fertilizer isn't spread evenly. Burning or temporary browning of the leaves can also occur. Apply no more than recommended rates, apply when the grass leaves are dry and water the lawn after fertilizing.

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For more information on fertilizing lawns, ask your county agent for the following publications: Soils Fact Sheet No. 7, "Fertilizing the Home Lawn and Landscape Materials," Soils Fact Sheet No. 4, "How to Take a Good Soil Sample" and Extension Folder 165, "The Home Lawn." You can also write for these publications to the Bulletin Room, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101.

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Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Luther J. Pickrel, Director of Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.