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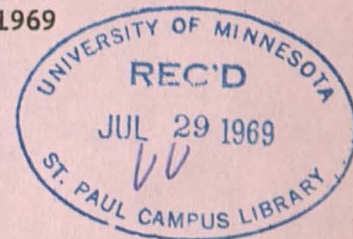
YARD 'N' GARDEN ③



EXTENSION
HORTICULTURISTS

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PLANTING A LAWN

Mid-August until September 10 is a good time to start a new lawn from seed in Minnesota. During this period we can often anticipate adequate rainfall and cool temperatures to start the germination and the establishment of the lawn. During the spring planting season the annual weeds are germinating at the same time and often become competitive.

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Fall soil preparation is especially important before starting a new lawn. Once the seed has been sown there is little that can be done to improve the soil. Here are some suggestions for soil preparation:

First of all, add organic matter to both sandy soils and heavy clay soils. Good sources of organic matter include barnyard manure, compost or commercial peat. The organic material should be worked into the upper 6 inch layer of the soil surface.

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Add 40 to 50 pounds of complete fertilizer such as 12-12-12 for every 1000 sq. feet of area. This should be worked into the soil along with the organic matter. A soil test will determine the need for lime. Contact your county agricultural agent for the soil test materials.

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Use a good quality grass seed containing a high percentage of permanent grasses. Grasses such as Kentucky bluegrass are recommended for the heavier soils, but mixtures with fescue are better on lighter soils and under shady conditions.

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Grass seed is usually sown on a firm seed bed. But if the soil is fluffy from tilling, it should be rolled prior to seeding. If the grass is growing well by the end of September you can make the first application of a complete fertilizer.

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Begin mowing when the grass is about 3 inches tall. During the early development of the grass, remove the clippings from the seeded area.

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