

Lawn Care

A discussion of the vital problems of lawn making and maintenance

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Foreword

THIS being the first edition of LAWN CARE we should state our purpose. Here it is: *To pass along to those who are trying to maintain satisfactory lawns the experiences of experts and amateurs.*

There is scarcely a lawn problem puzzling anyone which someone else has not been able to solve at least partially. It occurred to us that we might act as a sort of clearing-house for such information, which we propose to pass along by means of this leaflet at least four times yearly. LAWN CARE will be sent—without charge, of course—to all users of Scott's Seed and to others who request it.

We have this favor to ask. Bring us your grass growing problems and tell us also about your successes in meeting other lawn making difficulties. Your questions will be fully answered by the best authorities on the various subjects. Those which are especially knotty will be answered in the subsequent issue of LAWN CARE and a general discussion requested. The helpful ideas that are picked up here and there will thus be passed on to you and our many other friends.

This first issue must necessarily contain our own comments, largely; but we

hope hereafter to devote the greater amount of space to the actual experiences of those who are trying to maintain beautiful lawns.



Why Fall Planting Is Better

WE quote the following from an experiment station official whom we consider one of the best authorities on lawn matters:

"If possible, plan to build your lawn in the late summer or early fall. Naturally the date varies somewhat with the location but the season holds in most localities in the United States and Canada. What should be kept in mind is that grass seeds germinate and grow best in cool, wet weather. Early fall is better than early spring because it enables the grass to get a good start at a season when most weeds have sprouted and been cultivated out. With this start the new grass will be well along in the spring and be in better trim to combat weeds which grow rapidly when warm weather comes."

It may be further said that grass from fall seeding stools or tillers out, thus establishing itself securely before cold weather.



English Lawns Not Weedless

PERHAPS you have heard the old story of the American tourist who asked an English gardener how they could have such beautiful lawns as you find in England. The reply came back, "That is easy. You simply prepare the seed bed carefully; sow clean seed; roll; weed; water; fertilize and mow—after a hundred years of such practice you have a real lawn."

Everything is doubtless correct in that statement except the hundred years; and one important thing was overlooked: you must have English *climate*. The amount of moisture in the air and the frequent rains help to a very large degree in the easy maintenance of lawns in England. Nevertheless the late Dr. Piper, chairman of the Green Section of the U. S. Golf Association and an eminent authority on grass growing, made a trip to England a few years ago to study turf problems. He found weeds fully as bad in the English golf courses as they are on this side and a much less comprehensive knowledge of grasses, their habits, uses, etc. It was his opinion that our English friends are depending too much on their ideal grass growing weather to carry the load.



Mis-fit Mixtures

A NEW YORK Experiment Station Bulletin of November, 1927 reveals some interesting things about lawn mixtures. Various brands selling in greatest volume at retail were analyzed and

the findings published. Eighty-eight mixtures were tested, and here is the amazing thing: In twenty-six Timothy was the predominating variety. In exactly the same number Redtop was the favorite. Next came Rye Grass, first in twenty mixtures. Seventy-two of the eighty-eight mixtures gave preference to a quick growing grass, good for a season but not one of the three a *turf* producer. Kentucky Blue Grass, which should comprise approximately fifty per cent of a good lawn mixture, was preferred in but ten of the eighty-eight mixtures and in practically each of the ten an excessive amount of some other variety was used to offset the Blue Grass advantage. The reason for this is, of course, that Timothy, Redtop and Rye Grass are all much cheaper than Blue Grass. It is pretty safe to assume that if a lawn mixture is prepared to sell at a set price it *shouldn't be expected to produce a fine lawn.*



New York on Weeds

FROM the same Bulletin just quoted we have further figures on weeds. Forty-eight of the eighty-eight mixtures contained more than one per cent weed seeds. (One per cent means about 20,000 in each pound of seed.) That is particularly large considering that Timothy, Redtop and Rye Grass are varieties which can be obtained practically weedless. One mixture contained 3.15 per cent weeds—enough to infest a lawn for years to come. The entire lot averaged 80 per cent pure—fairly high if Blue Grass predominated, but quite



low considering the composition of the mixtures.

Scott's Lawn Seed is ninety-five per cent pure. Kentucky Blue Grass is the predominating variety and three strains of Bent are present, a very fine seed seldom obtainable in a higher purity than ninety per cent.



Opinion Differs

IT isn't expected that all lawn makers should agree on matters relating either to soil preparation or seed selection. Many times it is difficult to say who is right. But we feel justified in the light of our own experience in taking issue with an article on lawn making which appeared recently in a garden magazine. It seemed to us that several glaring mistakes were made and we shall comment upon them briefly.

In the first place Rye Grass was recommended in too large a percentage for a high grade lawn mixture. The cheaper mixtures contain an abundance of it because of the price. While it grows quickly there is a tendency for it to become coarse. During the past two years we have used none of it in our own mixture.

Another suggestion to which we take exception is that of putting Chewings Fescue in a lawn mixture except for extremely shady and very sandy locations. Under such conditions where a patchy turf is considered better than nothing Fescue would be acceptable. If you are not familiar with the appearance of Chewings Fescue perhaps this description will enable you to identify it.

Fescue is the low growing, fine grass that usually appears in circular patches. During July and August it takes on a sort of fuzzy appearance and when cut closely often turns very brown. Fescue frequently spoils the appearance of an old lawn. For a long time the best authorities have advised the use of *Poa Trivialis* for shade. We import the seed from Denmark and reclean it to a high purity. It is a beautiful grass and we use a small amount of it in our Regular Mixture. For shade we find it gives more satisfactory results when used in combination with a few other grasses than when sowed entirely alone. Scott's Shady Mixture contains seventy per cent of *Poa Trivialis* and, surprising as it may seem, most of the mixtures sold for shade contain none of it.



Scott's Turf Builder

THIS complete, lasting fertilizer for lawns is built upon a formula which insures the healthy, steady growth of grass blades and roots. Scott's Turf Builder is the result of our search for an all-around grass food containing a balanced ration of Nitrogen, Phosphoric Acid and Potash, the three elements comprising the ideal lawn diet.

The tendency in fertilizers in recent years has been toward quick stimulation. Your lawn is treated to a "banquet" which lasts for a limited time. The soil does not retain the elements for a long enough period to feed the grass properly.

A slower acting, longer enduring fertilizer for your lawn is desirable. Scott's Turf Builder possesses these qualities. To the best of our knowledge it offers



more units of plant food per dollar than any other fertilizer on the market.

We recommend the use of two pounds of Turf Builder per one hundred square feet. It will pay you to try some on your lawn this fall. Treat your grass to a real, nourishing meal.



Do You Know Your Weeds?

MAINTENANCE of a good lawn means a constant fight with *weeds*. While most of these pests must be pulled or dug out there are some which can be discouraged by other methods less laborious. We shall try to illustrate at least one common weed in each issue of **LAWN CARE**, give a brief history of it, and tell if possible how it may best be combated.



This, of course, is common plantain, one of the most familiar lawn weeds. Plantain is a perennial and propagates by seeds. Its seeding time is from July

to October. The basal leaves of plantain spread out to such an extent that they shade and frequently kill out the grasses underneath.

Plantain may be destroyed by treating it with carbolic acid without much defacement of the turf. Stab each plant in the center with a sharp stick and then squirt in a few drops of carbolic acid with a common machine oil can. Or, of course, the plant may be cut out with a spud. The best time for either operation is in dry weather, just before the spikes appear. In cultivated fields plantain is easily destroyed but in a lawn which may not be remade once in fifteen or twenty years it is apt to become a serious pest if not checked.



Have You Our Booklet?

IT is easy to misplace a small booklet. Perhaps you have lost either or both of "The Seeding and Care of Lawns" and "Bent Lawns." If so, extra copies are yours for the asking. We also have a folder of "Creeping Bent Questions and Answers" which may clear up some misunderstandings for you about this grass.



Preserve Lawn Care

IT is our plan to send **LAWN CARE** to you at least four times yearly. Occasionally it will be mailed alone under third class postage. Please don't mistake it for a circular in which you may have no interest. We are going to do our utmost to make this little house organ sufficiently interesting and helpful to you that you'll want to preserve each issue.