

# Lawn Care

T.M. REG

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## SPRING LAWN GROOMING

**A**CQUIRING an attractive lawn is the aim of more and more people. An ever increasing lawn-consciousness is evident throughout the country.

The techniques of growing grass vary somewhat between Tulsa and Trenton, Dallas and Detroit, Syracuse and Seattle. But generally speaking, the same fundamentals apply. The points at issue are how to make conditions most favorable for growing grass considering soil and climatic conditions and availability of supplementary moisture, then adopting and following the most reasonable maintenance program.

LAWN CARE strives to assemble ideas applicable to all parts of the country and to all types of lawns whether they

receive professional or home care. Spade work for the stories is done by a staff of a dozen or more men who work with grass as a pediatrician nurtures the development of a child. They test new ideas in the field, observe grass growing under all conditions, study and chart the results.

The basic work tempered with observations reported by readers provides the source of material for the early spring maintenance program herein outlined.

One of the major objectives in Scotts Lawn Research is to find ways of building and keeping lawns with the least possible expense to the owner. The right way is the most economical of time and materials.

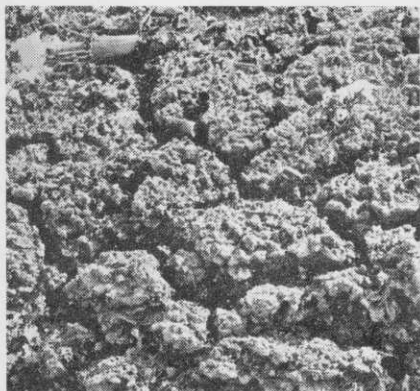
### LAWN DIVIDEND

Dramatic evidence of the value of lawn feeding in this reproduction of a colorphoto sent to the editors by Stewart D. Randall, Milford, Iowa, who writes:

"I recently purchased a home on Lake Okaboji and not having a healthy lawn, a feeding with TURF BUILDER was made. This picture taken in December shows exactly where I made the application."

A greener lawn during more months of the year is the reward of regular grass feeding.





Soil surface magnified to show the so-called honey-combed condition. This occurs during periods of alternate freezing and thawing. An especially good time for seeding as most of it falls into the cracks and is buried so it is in condition to sprout when the soil warms.

## EARLY START

Several spring lawn jobs can be gotten out of the way in late winter. Freezing cold does not harm the action of lime, grass food or the growing ability of good seed. It is all right to get started ahead of the first robin except on areas subject to severe washing.

**LIME.** Fortunately few lawns receive the annual "whitewash" or light dusting of lime that was as much a spring ritual as sulphur and molasses a generation or two ago.

A generous application of lime is needed every two or three years on those lawns with quite acid soils or where there is a deficiency of calcium and magnesium. This condition is more apt to exist in the New England and Atlantic States south into Georgia and westward to and including the Allegheny mountain country.

It is a good idea to get a soil test if there is any question about the need for lime. Raw, ground agricultural lime is probably the preferred form. However,

hydrated lime is satisfactory especially for cool weather use. The maximum amount of lime per application is 50 pounds per 1000 square feet.

**FEED.** Very few lawns are fed often enough. Any fair soil will keep grass alive almost indefinitely but without feeding the growth becomes steadily more spindly. In contrast proper feeding develops vigorous growth for good deep color. The minimum feeding program is (1) once in early spring, (2) repeated in late spring or early summer and (3) again in early fall.

More and more folks are using the combination of fertilizer with weed control. This can replace one of the feedings, in fact it should be used at least once each year. Since the weed control action is through the leaves of growing weeds, it should be applied when the broad-leaved weeds are in active growth.

**GRUB CONTROL.** The Japanese beetle as well as the more recent arrival, the Asiatic garden beetle, continue their destructive activities in the east and in scattered localities of the mid-west. The beetles themselves do not harm turf but their grubs or larvae do. Modern pest controls can be applied to grub-proof a lawn. Late winter or early spring is a good time for application as alternate freezing and thawing carries the material into the root zone where it is needed.

**SEEDING.** It is possible to overdo the matter of seeding by using too much seed. Here is one place where economy can be effected. It is a mistake to sow seed by hand. This is wasteful because few people are skilled in scattering evenly the relatively small amount of seed that should be used.

If hand broadcasting is used, the seed should be mixed with two or three times its bulk of inert material such as

sand or screened soil. The preferred method is to use a modern precision spreader. This should be of a type that will evenly sow as little seed as 2 pounds per 1000 square feet. This, by the way, is an adequate rate for good seed when reseeding a lawn.

Some lawns are so thick they do not require a general reseeding. However, if there are many bare spots, it will probably be less wasteful to make an overall light seeding rather than to try to hand seed the bare spots.

**SPREADER.** A precision spreader, like the one illustrated here, makes it easy to apply lawn materials accurately and speedily. The Scotts Spreader is



quickly adjusted to proper rates for seeding, feeding, pest control and weed control. The model No. 65 is equipped with a baffle plate in the hopper which is easily adjusted to transform the spreader into a carrying cart for transporting dirt and other materials.

**CLEAN UP DEBRIS.** It is good to rake or sweep the lawn once or twice in the early spring, particularly during periods of freezing and thawing. Leaves should be removed lest they mat and smother small patches of grass. Discretion is necessary as it is not advisable to walk over a lawn when the grass is frozen or when the ground is so soft that footprints are left.

SIRS:

The water shortage here has started a lot of talk in our neighborhood: How will it affect our lawns if we can't water them this summer?

I believe the answer is to apply Turf Builder in late winter, preferably while a light snow is on the ground.

I have done this in previous years and noted that besides giving an extra head start, it promoted deep root growth which helped my lawn to stand up during the hot dry spells we get on Long Island.

Turf Builder is easier to apply with a light snow on the ground. The wheel tracks of my Scotts Spreader help to mark the area covered. The ground is hard so you don't mark up your lawn. And what's more, it's fun to get the lawn program started on a bright day before the big spring "push" is on you.

Flushing, N. Y.

A. D.

### HIJACKERS LAWN CONSCIOUS

Last year two truckloads of Scotts Seed and Turf Builder were stolen from a midwest dealer's warehouse. Later it was reported that itinerant door-to-door peddlers were feverishly selling Scott products in towns about a hundred miles away at ridiculously low prices. While it was not possible to relate these two incidents directly, it seems likely that this is how the "hot goods" were disposed of.

In addition to previous LAWN CARE warnings against strange Black Dirt Peddlers, the lawn enthusiast is also cautioned to buy his other lawn needs from known reputable sources.

Sirs:

I have a large lawn and the front part of the lawn has never been as nice as the back half. About two weeks ago I put your Turf Builder on the front part. The funny part of it is, I have one of your spreaders and was putting it on with it. My husband was sitting in the yard so I just walked around him. You can see just where I walked around him. Just where he was the grass is yellow.

Indianapolis, Ind.

Mrs. J. W. G.

# Lawn Reseeding Suggestions

Most any lawn requires additional seeding from time to time. Bald spots develop because of injury or as a result of holes left by departing weeds. In the fall the voids left by retreating Crabgrass or Bermuda grass should be filled-in with good seed to restore a solid green covering.

Growing conditions are better for seedings in the early spring or early fall. If the need for seeding develops at some other time, it should be accomplished to get grass started in those places before unwanted weeds take over.

If the turf thins out, a general seeding is advisable. Otherwise spot seeding only is sufficient. Some folks use their spreaders to sow lightly several times a year so they can enjoy the fresh, bright color of seedling grass.

## METHOD

First choice for general over-all seeding is a mechanical distributor like the Scott Spreader. This saves seed and enables more even application. As a matter of fact it is probably more economical than spot seeding if much area requires it.

In hand broadcasting it's a good idea to mix the seed with an equal bulk of inert material such as sand, screened soil or even cornmeal. It is difficult for the average person to sow seed as sparingly as it should be sown unless it is somehow increased in bulk.

## EXCESSIVE SEEDING HARMFUL

Plant life is similar to human or animal in that it is unhealthy to have them living in too crowded conditions. If too much seed is sown, the soil will not supply enough moisture or nutrients to support the crowded seedlings. They will consequently be weakened and more subject to ravages of damp-

ing off and other diseases. The idea of sowing extra heavily because of poor soil is exactly wrong. The poorer the soil, the fewer plants it will support. Generous use of grass food should accompany heavy seedings.

## HELPING THE SEED

Many have difficulty in getting grass started in bare or thin areas of established lawns. Such failures are mainly due to merely scattering seed on top of the ground. There it is easy prey to birds, winds and washing, driving rainfall, or if it escapes these fates, the seedlings die for want of moisture. A little care in reseeding bare spots brings better results. Here are some suggestions:



1. Loosen and fine the soil crust by lightly chopping it with a flat garden spade, axe or spike tamp. Other good implements include the half moon turf edger or a flat walk scraper.

2. Topdress with good soil. This may follow seeding, if no more than a quarter-inch is used. If a heavier covering, seed after soil is spread and then rake seed into loose soil and firm by tamping and rolling.

In warm, dry weather try to keep surface moist until the seedlings are well rooted. This may mean quite frequent watering.

If the weather is cold or quite dry seed can lie dormant for many weeks without injury to it. Germination will take place when favorable conditions arrive.