

Lawn Care

T.M. REG
PUBLISHED FIVE TIMES YEARLY FOR LAWNTHUSIASTS

CHOICE OF SEED

The right selection of lawn seed is just as important a part of good lawns as proper planting, correct feeding, watering or mowing. All of these play their parts in the success or failure of the carpet of grass around a home, in a park, or on a playfield.

Figured costwise, grass seed for planting a new lawn amounts to about half a cent per square foot regardless of what seed is used. This is such a small portion of the total cost that it has no significant effect on the initial investment of a lawn.

However, when it comes to the kind of lawn—the beauty, permanence, and enjoyment to be derived—seed selection assumes tremendous importance.

How can one do right by his lawn in this important matter? Consider the commodity paint. A gallon of one kind may cost more than another, but if it covers much greater area it is more economical. In addition, one coat of

quality paint is likely to provide a more permanent surface than twice as much inferior paint.

With lawn seed, the ordinary mixtures contain the big seeds of coarse grasses. Typically these run about a million per pound. So it is necessary to plant two or three times as much of ordinary seed compared to quality seed having two or three million per pound.

Most lawns are planted in an effort to establish a permanently beautiful turf. That attractive, well-groomed appearance calls for top quality grasses that are uniform in texture. Coarse or bunched kinds just won't do. If a lawn is to be permanent, the annual grasses so often found in ordinary seed are likewise unsatisfactory. Only perennial grasses make perennial lawns.

Equal Effort Required

The effort applied in preparation of an area for lawn is the same whether good or mediocre seed is sown.



THE WISER CHOICE—Clean seeds of desirable perennial grasses have 2 or 3 times more seeds in a pound.



NO BARGAIN HERE—Ordinary seed is coarse so fewer in a pound and more pounds needed. More weeds and chaff.

First the soil is spaded and raked or cultivated by mechanical methods. If it is poor soil, humus is mixed in. If it is acid, limestone may be used. The grade is established and dragged. Finally a meal of good lawn food is raked in as the seed bed is given its finishing touches.

Up to this point seed has not even entered the picture, and yet most of the work and cost have been expended. Sowing the seed, especially if a precision spreader is used, is just a matter of minutes.

This preliminary work can be protected by choosing good seed. It involves very little and yet only by its use can a "picture" lawn be achieved.

Strengthening Old Lawns

It is not only during construction of a new lawn that grass seed should be carefully selected. There is also the matter of reinforcing an established lawn.

Years can be added to its lifetime of service and beauty if it is kept well fed. This has been pointed out in other issues of **LAWN CARE**.

A dense turf is the best defense against weeds of all kinds including the infiltration of Bermuda Grass, Ox-



Safeguard the preliminary work by sowing quality seed.

alis, Chickweed and similar trouble-makers. So in addition to regular feeding, an occasional overseeding is good practice. The procedure is simple. After one of the spring or fall feedings just go over the whole lawn with a little seed. A very small amount is needed for this purpose if quality seed is

used—only a couple pounds on each thousand square feet.

Renovating Lawns

Some folks fall heir to a lawn of dubious character and the need to change it. Perhaps the original builder was in a hurry and gave inadequate attention to his selection of seed.

Without digging it up and starting from scratch many people in this position have been well rewarded by following this conversion program which increases the population of desirable grasses, adds new blood so to speak, and shows great improvement:

First—adjust the mower to cut very closely, almost to scalp the lawn. Mow it this way from two different directions such as north and south, then east and west. Remove the clippings and put them on the compost heap.

Second—apply a turf building lawn food, preferably using a spreader to distribute it uniformly and in the right amount. Then water this in.

Third—sow carefully selected top quality lawn seed composed of perennial, fine-leaved and weedfree grasses. Three or four pounds per thousand square feet is plenty for good seed.

That's all there is to it except that like any lawn it should be fed three or four times a year thereafter.

"When you select the seed you select the lawn" is just as true as the advice of the gardener to his client when he said "Your lawn can't be any better than the seed used no matter how carefully it's planted."

Most homeowners have neither the time nor the inclination to qualify as seed experts but they can protect their lawn investment by selecting seed with a reputation for producing lawns which are the pride of the neighborhood.

"Please send us your two year free subscription to Lawn care. We are glad we put in Scotts lawn seed. Someone told us to get almost double the number of pounds of another seed. We decided to get Scotts. We sowed it ourselves and it amply covered the area with half the amount of seed."—(January 26 postcard received from a Monrovia, Calif., housewife.)

New Weed Book

Lawn enthusiasts, and other types of gardeners too, will find interesting looking as well as reading in the revised edition of "Weeds of California" by Robbins, Bellue & Ball.

This amply illustrated book by a famed trio of weed experts helps even the novice to recognize some of the weeds he is fighting.

Still on the press, the book is expected to be ready by the time this notice is read.

Write to Supervisor of Documents, State Printing Office, Sacramento, California for latest information about the cost.

SEED SITUATION

In times like these, there is much talk about scare buying. People try to anticipate their future needs and buy ahead. It is difficult for a seed business to do that because of the problem of perishability.

Seed scarcities usually result from drouth, crop injury at harvest time, late spring freezes, floods, plant diseases and, occasionally, to a short labor supply when the crop is ready for harvest. Because grass seed comes from such a large geographical area, almost the entire world, the same factors seldom affect all varieties at once.

Only a small percentage of any harvest will make Scott quality. In two seasons in the early forties, there were times in late spring when there was not enough Scott quality seed to take care of all the demand. Frankly, no such emergency is expected this spring although this is hardly the time for bold statements. Airfields, army camps, defense plants, and aid to Europe can make quite a drain on seed supplies.

In the early part of the year, Scott seed stocks are ample and the quality, thanks to constantly improved harvesting and processing techniques, was never so high.

The Finger Points at Smog



In *LAWN CARE 108* Fog, Smog and Fumes were briefly discussed in relation to their effect on lawns.

Fumes such as gas escaping from mains have long been known to adversely affect grass. Fog is not known to have other than possible beneficial effects.

Now comes word from John T. Middleton, associate plant pathologist of the University of California College of Agriculture, that lawn grasses in the Los Angeles area are sometimes seriously damaged by smog in the forms of gas and perhaps aerosols.

"Depending on the dosage, the injury may be more or less extensive," says Dr. Middleton.

Typical symptoms of gas pollutant damage are first a silvering, then yellowing, and later a browning. Damaged grass is not completely brown but has a slightly greenish color due to the undamaged tips. Aerosol pollution causes damage in the form of distinct spots of dead tissue on the blades.

It is interesting to learn that a number of weeds have also been damaged by the air pollution in smog. Among the susceptible varieties are Wild Oats, Pigweed, Mallow and Poa Annua (annual bluegrass). This last, described in *LAWN CARE 108*, is the most susceptible plant observed to date.

POET'S CORNER

*I know a lawn that's like a gem,
The whole town wants a copy.
"Okey," the owner says to them,
"Get Scotts to be its poppy."*

—A Lawnfellow.

Woe to Weeds



This is the easy modern way to keep lawns weedfree.

Is there anything more attractive and pleasurable than a smooth green carpet of grass, free from weeds? Well, hardly anything, especially now that it is so easy to keep weeds out.

Last year Scotts introduced a new principle in a weed control product by chemically impregnating the active ingredient into fine particles of vermiculite, a clean, dust free, mica-like material. The new product, called SCUTL, worked wonders in taking out Crabgrass in two or three easy applications.

Now this same principle is utilized in another product for control of broad-leaved weeds. The agronomist working with the chemist has succeeded in introducing the alkanolamine salts of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid into the same type of carrier. The result is a dry applied control for the non-grass type of weeds. It is called 4-XD.

This is not the first broad-leaved-weed control that could be used in the dry form. That precedent belongs to the combination lawn food and weed control which has saved folks so much time and work since its introduction by Scotts several years ago. This double purpose material is still very much on the market but is necessarily more costly in application than 4-XD. The lat-

ter is just as efficient for weed control but does not supply grass food.

Bent Lawns

Owners of Bentrass lawns, including lawn bowling clubs, will be interested in this 8-page supplement, "The Care of Scotts Bentgrass."

It discusses this particular type of lawn as regards mowing, feeding, top-dressing, insect and fungus control. Also included is a description of the steps to follow if the Bentgrass has been allowed to get too thick and off-color.

A copy can be obtained by writing to Scotts, Palo Alto, California.

SIRS:

I am very much interested in the LAWN CARE bulletins which I have been receiving.

In your issue No. 110, I take exception to the method of mowing the lawn outlined in your diagram. Early spring lawns are soft and the inside part of the uncut grass is naturally being bent during the operation of the mower. By mowing back and forth or reversing the cut, the mower has a tendency to pick up this bent-over grass. If the grass is heavy enough to need recutting, the clippings should probably be taken off. I am inclined to leave fine grass clippings on the lawn if I can.

D. H. CAMERON.

Salem, Oregon.

Lawn Tips Neatly Filed

LAWN CARE has been published continuously since 1928. Information in early bulletins has been brought up to date and condensed in a series of digest



chapters. These are combined with current bulletins in a paper bound book for only 25c or in a green leather-style ring binder for \$1.00.

See your local Scotts dealer or mail coin, stamps or check to Scotts at Palo Alto, California.

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