

Lawn Care

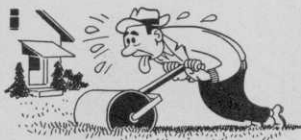
T.M. REG

To help you sow a fine scene of sparkling green



FAR BE IT FROM us to discourage the hope that springs eternal for a lawn utopia. But it has been our experience that last year's "miracles" are this year's sober reflections. To wit; the new chemical soil conditioners which, not so long ago, were being hailed with an editorial enthusiasm that bordered on the rhapsodic but which are now finding a logical, if limited, place in lawn and garden activity.

Our experimental work over a two year period indicates that soil conditioners may have two possible uses, both relating to soil stabilization. If you work with clay or silt soil you are all too familiar with its tendency to slake and crust after a heavy rain, leaving you to wonder why you bothered to cultivate it in the first place. For you, the use of soil conditioners as a surface dressing may be just the thing for they tend to curb such antics and preserve the crumb surface. With their ability to hold soil in place, the new chemicals are also useful in protecting slopes until grass is firmly rooted. Think not, however, that they are any panacea for a really serious problem where a heavy water flow undercuts the terrace or hill. For erosion control at the surface, yes.



"I'M IN A SAD STATE of confusion", a young man of our acquaintance told us recently, "first I read how important it is to keep soil open with chemicals and aerifiers and then I run across a column telling how hard the author worked last spring pushing a heavy

roller over his lawn. I go around like Hamlet muttering, 'to open or not to open, to roll or not to roll, that is the question!' " Fortunately, it was a question we could answer with a good deal of assurance. A light water or sand ballast roller is a fine thing to firm frost-heaved grass roots into the soil or to work up a good appetite for dinner but it's a serious mistake to use a heavy roller on the clay or silts that make up most of the country's lawns. A heavy roller can actually mash a plastic soil. So our advice is, if you must roll make yourself a good tennis court.



IN A MEDICAL report, we read the other day over a double chocolate malted, that most adults suffer from over-eating. Not being of a mind to ponder such irrelevancies, we promptly came up with a report of our own: lawns, we claim, are definitely not over-fed. Our scouts over the country tell us most lawns are on a starvation diet and they rarely see one that would not be the better for a good square meal now and again. In case you are afraid that your lawn will blister the hand that feeds it by demanding too frequent mowing, we are happy to assure you that if the grass is fed properly — light doses repeated a couple of times during the growing season — a good fertilizer should produce thicker, sturdier grass without excessive topgrowth. Turf Builder at 5 or 10 pounds per 1000 square feet spring, summer and fall fills the bill nicely.

TOO MUCH WORK to feed your lawn, you say? Not with a good lawn spreader like the Scotts Spreader which does the job evenly and accurately with an application of as little as 2 pounds per 1000 square feet. It is not necessary to weigh or measure the seed; just set the Scale Mark and walk over the lawn. Better yet, let the little wife walk over the lawn for you — just to show her how easily it's done, of course. Or set the youngsters up in business. We've heard of several teen-agers who are making a pretty penny (although we believe they call it a "fast buck") doing spreader jobs in their neighborhoods at a flat rate per thousand square feet.

A FEW WORDS to the wise on overseeding a lawn. A good stand of grass protects the seed pretty well until freezing and thawing and soaking rains imbed it. Bare spots, however, need roughing up so the seed finds lodging in loose soil and a covering is suggested to protect the seed from washing, blowing or becoming a picnic for the birds. A covering also retains needed moisture. Pulverized peat moss, screened soil or similar mulch material makes a good covering. Only a shallow covering — not more than a quarter-inch — is advised. Buried deeper, it will not get the air and light needed for germination.

IN CASE YOU'VE been reading about the use of chemicals to stop the growth of grass at some ideal height, and we admit the idea has a certain appeal for the man who mows his own lawn, we must report a consensus of extreme skepticism. This idea has been kicked around for quite a few years but so far encouraging experiences seem to be limited to some roadside parkways — where grass is tall and tough and where turf appearance is less important than on a home lawn. Looks like the old mowing machine will be around for a few more years.

NEW — *Spreader Service Manual and Parts List. General Setting Guide to hang up in the garage for quick reference. Free for the asking* — Scotts, Marysville, Ohio.



It's easy to turn the young man's fancy to the lawn . . . and with the spreader it's real fun.

English Writer Reviews Lawn History

"Practical Lawncraft" is the title of an excellent book by R B Dawson, Director of the Board of Greenskeeping Research, St Ives Research Station, Bingley, Yorkshire. His publishers are Crosby Lockwood & Son, Ltd of London. This text first published in 1939 was recently revised and reprinted.

Mr. Dawson establishes the 18th Century as the time the lawn really came into its own. Strangely enough at about the same time, garden experts began writing about the difficulties of obtaining good seed, and warning about the use of "hay seeds".

In the author's opinion, the most epoch making event in the history of the lawn was the invention of the reel type mower, credit for which he gives to one, Edwin Budding, presumably about 1830. The first power-driven lawn mower was supposedly introduced in 1902.

Although the British Isles have long been famed for outstanding lawns and turf areas, Mr Dawson points out that

the first formal experimental work with grasses was in the United States, inaugurated in 1885 by J B Olcott at the Connecticut Experiment Station. Presumably the next institution to set up experiments in grass was the Rhode Island College of Agriculture, this work dating from 1890. [This institution, now the University of Rhode Island, is still a leader in experimenting with turf grasses and probably has a record of the longest continued and uninterrupted work in the field, Ed.]

The Green Section of the United States Golf Association was not established until 1920, and as stated by Mr Dawson, "as a result of the enthusiasm of Dr C V Piper and Dr R A Oakley of the U S Department of Agriculture".

It was not until 1924 that a program of turf research was inaugurated in England and actually this did not get underway until 1928 because of the difficulty of raising the necessary funds.

According to Mr Dawson, green-keeping investigations have started in New Zealand, Australia, New South Wales, Queensland and South Africa. The desire for and the enjoyment of good turf seems to be universal in all free lands of the world.

New Lawns

Start as early as soil is workable.

Extra time for soil preparation will pay good dividends. If feasible, do smaller areas complete including seeding, so rain will not necessitate recultivating.

If lime is needed, work to depth of three or four inches. All soils will respond to generous feedings. Use heavier rates on poorer soils. Spread fertilizer just before final raking to keep it near the surface.

Seed lightly but evenly. Rake in seed. Roll to firm surface soil. As soon as first sprouts appear, keep area moist if possible.

Sirs:

Canada is now my home but I was born in England. I am a professional horticulturist and received my education and training in the old country. At present I am the foreman in charge of Oake's Garden Theatre here in Niagara Falls. I would like to say that I have found your Lawn Care very useful publications in adapting myself to the North American conditions.

Early next month I am to give a talk to some thirty or so amateur gardeners on lawn care and I would like to introduce them to your Lawn Care issues.

Niagara Falls, Ont

H BOOTHMAN



The generally open winter, following a dry summer and fall, had interesting effects on grasses. One of the most striking was the difference in color of grass generously fed last fall. It stayed much greener due to more vigorous growth and greater resistance to cold and winter fungi. The light streaks in the picture show result of skipping in the spreader application of Turf Builder. The grass in these streaks is brown in spite of the fact this lawn is fed twice yearly. Most lawns are undernourished or even starved.

Misrepresentation

A home owner in New Jersey recently sent in a sample of seed for checking. He stated it was sold to him as Scotts Seed at a bargain price but since the delivery was in unbranded bags, he became suspicious.

Rightly so. He bought a coarse annual variety of seed that might have harmed his lawn. As the transaction was traced it became obvious that the person selling the seed to the LAWN CARE reader had at best a cloudy title to the seed, and was guilty of serious misrepresentation besides.

In Akron, Ohio, an attorney wrote that several in his neighborhood had contracted to have lawns planted around their new homes, specifying Scotts Seed. To his dismay, he learned the seed was delivered in plain burlap bags without any identification. Examination of a sample confirmed this man's fears. This experience again points out the wisdom of buying products only in original sealed containers carrying the identification of the producer as well as the backing of the seller.

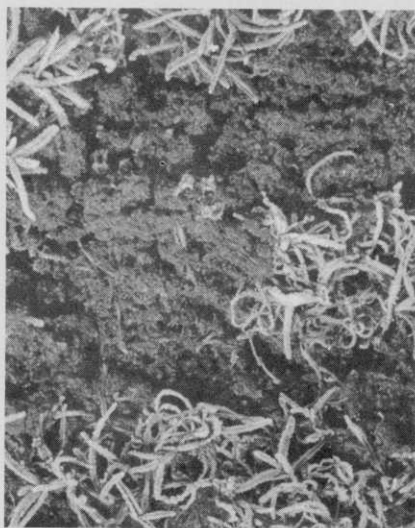
Similar Lawn Experience

... This letter should have been written years ago but the report should be more valuable to your readers now that seven years have passed. At that time, I subscribed to LAWN CARE and used it as a guide to build a lawn around our new home. The outlook was anything but encouraging because we had nothing but clay and gravel, and further complications of shade from large oak trees.

My experience from that beginning dovetails with the program as outlined in LAWN CARE 123, describing the Marysville High School lawn. I started with Scotts Seed and Turf Builder and now use Turf Builder religiously each spring and fall. For the past three years, the neighbors have been most complimentary about my lawn, saying it is the best in the neighborhood. I have converted many of them but there are still a few who persist in using other methods with obvious lack of success. Perhaps time will change them over also.

Baltimore, Md

HARRY E UHLER



Whassis? It's in most every yard!
Frost is on the grass. Honeycombed soil just right for feeding or seeding.

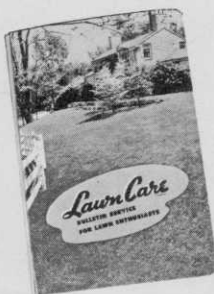
Seasonal Advice

Separate issues on particular subjects will be mailed without charge. Just let us know the subjects of special interest.

Spring Program
Weed Control
Tree Feeding
Soil Testing

New Lawns
Grass in Shade
Proper Mowing
Use of Lime

LAWN CARE has been published continuously since 1928. Previous issues



have been revised and condensed for ready reference. Available in loose-leaf ring binder at one dollar, post-paid. Also heavy paper-covered file at 25c, post-paid. Current bulletins includ-

ed and there is plenty of room for future ones.

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