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Kentucky Bluegrass

Seeding Guide

Starting a lawn from seed has several advantages. Seeding will allow direct root establishment in the soil at the site. It is also cost-effective and requires less labor.

When starting a new lawn from seed, prepare the soil as described in our soil prep guide and incorporate a starter fertilizer. A fertilizer high in Phosphorus (P) will stimulate initial root growth and assist in establishment of the turfgrass. As always, follow the recommended rate on the label.

Seeding methods include:

1. Broadcast seeding by broadcast spreader or by hand
2. Drill seeding by use of a Brillion drill
3. Hydro-seeding by a certified landscaper

Hint: *When seeding, the seedbed should be firm to ensure good soil to seed contact. Soil-to-seed contact is essential to increase germination and establishment rates and also makes for healthy seedlings. Ideally, seed depth should be between 1/8 to 1/4 of an inch below the soil surface.*

Frequent and light waterings are needed until the seed has germinated. The soil surface must remain moist, but not saturated, for proper germination and establishment to occur. **You should not allow the top 1/4 inch of the seedbed to become dry during the establishment period.**

Mulch can be added to the soil surface to prevent evaporation and conserve soil moisture. A mulch product such as Seed-Aide® or a general hydro-mulch can assist in the establishment of turfgrass and will prevent water loss due to evaporation. You may also use certified weed-free straw or erosion control blankets to attain the same goal. Once the lawn has established, normally after the first two mowings, watering can be reduced.

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Overseeding / Renovating Existing Lawns

If over half the lawn is dead, bare, or grown with weeds and you desire the best uniform appearance, it's wise to start over. If more than half of it still looks good, renovation makes sense. Localized bare spots can be repaired by hand in early spring or early fall by following these simple steps:

1. Remove dead grass and weeds.
2. Till or spade the soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches to loosen it.
3. Apply soil amendments such as fertilizer and organic matter as needed and work them into the soil. Use a garden rake to smooth and level the soil.
4. Spread lawn seed evenly and rake lightly to ensure good soil-to-seed contact. Firm the soil with an empty lawn roller or other tool or by simply walking over the area. Then cover the area with mulch.
5. Keep the ground moist by watering lightly as much as 2 to 3 times a day until the grass plants are 3 inches tall.

Overseeding every 3 to 5 years with a quality grass seed mix or blend may also be a good idea. Overseeding with newer varieties of lawn species will improve the characteristics of the lawn when it comes to drought and disease resistance.

Overseeding methods include:

1. Broadcasting immediately following aeration with optional top dressing
2. "Slit seeding" aerates soil as seed is placed into the soil (some landscapers operate this kind of seeding machine)

Hint: *When overseeding into existing turf, top dressing with a mixture of compost/organic material will ensure good soil-to-seed contact. This will increase germination and establishment rates and also makes for healthy seedlings. Again, seed depth should be between 1/8 to 1/4 inch below the soil surface.*

Please contact us with any questions.



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