

Time to Fertilize your Lawn!

How do I know if my lawn needs fertilizer?

The best way to determine if your lawn requires certain plant nutrients is to get the soil tested. This test is available through your local Extension Agent. It is easy to do and inexpensive. The results returned to you will include recommendations on the amounts of plant nutrients and lime that would be beneficial to your lawn. Soil tests are not used to determine nitrogen needs. Nitrogen is applied based upon established requirements by grass species, seasons of growth and intended use.

What if I don't fertilize?

Your lawn will gradually thin and weeds may invade. Proper and timely fertilization can be good for both your lawn and the environment. There is less chance for nutrient and soil runoff to surface waters from a healthy stand of grass than bare soil or thin grass. Healthy lawns will have less disease, insect and weed problems, reducing the need for pesticide applications. Well-maintained lawns look appealing and are more wear tolerant.

When should I fertilize?

It depends on the type of grass you are growing and the lawn appearance (e.g.; color, density, uniformity) you want. In general, it is best to fertilize when grass is actively growing and can take up the fertilizer. Summer is best for warm season grasses (zoysiagrass and bermudagrass), while September, October, and November are best for cool season grasses (tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass). If you are unsure what type of grass you have, ask your Extension Agent or landscape professional. They will also be helpful in determining the amount and type of fertilizer necessary based on this same test.

How much fertilizer do I need?

Your soil test report will give you specific information on the amounts of phosphorus, potassium, calcium and magnesium available in the soil and if additional amounts are required. Remember that more is not better, and less may be worse! Lawn fertilizer is measured in pounds per 1000 square feet. To determine square feet multiply length by width of turf area.

What is the best fertilizer for my lawn?

One that provides P2O5 and/or K2O if determined deficient by soil test or provides only N when P and K levels are adequate. One that has some amount of slowly available N source. Slow release N sources are usually stated on the label. It may be as WIN or Water Insoluble Nitrogen, sulfur-coated urea, natural organic N or other slow release technologies. Slowly available N fertilizers make nitrogen available a little at a time, the way your lawn needs it, which reduces leaching potential.



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