

Timely Turf Tips

January 2011

HAPPY NEW YEAR! When making your list of New Year's resolutions, don't forget your plants, wildlife, yard and garden! Pick out a few tips from below to enjoy healthy, beautiful gardens and lawn all year long.

In the New Year, I resolve to:

- **Plant a vegetable garden.** Food prices are climbing. Shoppers can't have failed to notice the dramatic rises in basic food costs in the last couple of months. This is the year I finally plant a vegetable garden. Where do I to start? http://www.extension.umn.edu/gardeninfo/components/info_vegetables.html
- **Provide food and habitat for wildlife.** I will plant fruit bearing trees and shrubs that will attract many types of birds and wildlife to my yard year round. Providing birdhouses and nesting boxes may help my feathered friends survive our cold winters. I am going to purchase chickadee boxes at the Mill to hang now. Chickadee winter survival techniques: <http://www.gerbrandt.com/matthew/chickadees.asp>
- **Hang suet** and keep feeders filled to provide much needed calories for my local birds.
- **Send a soil sample** to the University of Minnesota to learn what my fertilizer needs are, rather than guessing. I will bring my results to Steve and he will recommend the appropriate type and amount.
- **When studying plant catalogs**, look for pest- and disease-resistant plants, such as mildew-resistant phlox, Fusarium-resistant tomatoes and disease-resistant crabapples that will make my gardening job easier and keep my plants healthier.
- **Spread a circle of mulch around young trees** to keep lawn mowers from damaging the bark, leading to canker diseases later on.
- **Irrigate new trees and shrubs the first two years** especially during dry weather to help them establish good root systems.
- **Use a soaker hose** or some type of irrigation system for the flower beds and vegetable garden that won't wet the foliage and encourage leaf spots. Hugo Feed Mill will help with design and product.

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