

Timely Turf Tips

August 2017

Keep watering the garden; remember consistency is key. Recent rain has helped relieve some of the dry conditions that had occurred last month, but gardens and yards benefit from uniform watering (1 inch per week.) Regular watering to supplement inadequate rainfall will lead to better garden production. This is especially true with tomatoes, which can develop blossom end rot if watering is inconsistent.

August tips for the lawn and garden:

- Last month we recommended keeping grass 3 to 3 ½ inches tall with regular mowing. This is still true until more moisture becomes available as fall approaches. Remember that gradually lowering cutting height (think 1/2 inch increments or one notch change at a time per mowing) is best for the grass.
- Mid-August is the best time to seed new lawn, overseed, patch bare spots, and install sod. There isn't as much competition with weed seed in the fall and longer, cooler nights make it easier for grass to become established. For best results, do it before September 20. Remember to apply a starter fertilizer before the seed/sod. See the folks at the mill for information about soil sampling now so that you know the proper amount of fertilizer to add when preparing the area. If your area to seed is large, ask about renting our Hydroseeder to make a big job easier.
- If you fertilize only once per year (low maintenance), then late August is the time to do it. Apply your fall fertilizer at a rate of 1 pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet. We recommend Hugo Feed Mill's brand 25-0-15, with slow-release nitrogen for a longer feeding period. A 40# bag covers 10,000 square feet and there is a coupon attached below.
- Core aerate mid-August to lessen soil compaction and allow better penetration of moisture to the root zone. Excess thatch should be reduced also as more oxygen is available to organisms that breakdown the thatch, including earthworms.
- Thinking of trying late season vegetables? Check this U of M Extension link for information on days to maturity and cold hardiness for various early-maturing vegetables: www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/vegetables/planting-vegetables-midsummer-fall-harvest/ Radishes, lettuce and spinach can be planted until mid-August. If not planning a second crop, consider planting "green manure" mentioned in the article. Check with the crew at the mill to pick up the recommended legumes and grasses to plant.
- Continue to maintain the garden. Keep weeding and harvesting (or removing faded flowers in the flower garden.) Dispose of any overripe produce, which can attract wasps and picnic beetles to the garden. Consider donating extra garden produce to local food shelves.
- **Stop and see our pepper display at the Minnesota State Fair! We will be located in the MSHS booth in the Horticultural building.**



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