



STOVER SEED®

Teaming confidence with nature since 1922

Technical Guide

ESTABLISHMENT AND CARE OF TURFGRASSES

INTRODUCTION

Planting a lawn from seed, whether a new lawn or overseeding an existing lawn, is a simple process and when done properly can provide you with years of enjoyment. A seeded lawn, compared to sod, offers a broader number of seed mixtures and varieties that can be tailored to your particular conditions such as soil type, climate, sun or shade location, degree of wear, etc.

First, choose a good quality product that will serve your particular climate and needs. Stover Seed products are formulated based on industry recognized test data at sites throughout the United States.

WHEN TO PLANT

The type of grass you wish to plant will be determined by the time of year. Plant cool season grasses (Kentucky Bluegrass, Perennial Ryegrass, Fescues) in early fall or spring. Plant warm season grasses late spring to early summer. In milder climates, the planting windows can be expanded as long as soil temperature is in the range of 50 to 65°F for cool season grasses and above 65° for warm season grasses. You can use a meat thermometer to check soil temperature. Planting seed in high temperatures (90°+) can create weed, disease and germination problems.

SEED BED PREPARATION FOR A NEW LAWN

Remove all old vegetation and cultivate soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. It is recommended that an organic soil amendment be added to the soil to insure the development of a good root system and dense growth. Other amendments may be added at this time to adjust soil pH which should be between 6.2 and 7. A soil test may be advisable. Add lime to increase the pH or sulfur or organic matter to lower it. After cultivation, rake lawn level and slope away from buildings. Be sure to level areas which may cause "puddling" when watered.

WEEDS

Nearly all weeds that germinate in a new lawn are from seeds that laid dormant in the soil for many years. Brought in by wind, birds and organic matter, they exist beneath the surface until the soil is cultivated bringing the seeds to the surface. When given light and moisture they germinate to compete with the emerging grass seed. Healthy lawns crowd out weeds while neglected ones encourage weed growth. With proper care most weed problems can be easily eliminated.

If the area you are planting has a weed problem or if the current stand of grass is undesirable, it is best to use some sort of weed control prior to planting. Digging out the weeds is not always effective and cultivating the soil can bring weed seeds to the surface and cause problems. Therefore, in order to control weeds, prepare the soil as if you were going to plant grass seed but wait to plant the seed. Instead, water the area thoroughly for 2 to 3 weeks in order to get the weed seeds to germinate. After the weeds have sprouted, spray the area with the herbicide glyphosate (commonly sold as RoundUp®) according to the instructions on the container. Wait 1 week after spraying and then plant the lawn seed without disturbing the soil surface. This simple technique is effective in controlling most weed problems.

FERTILIZING

Your new lawn will get off to a much better start if you put down a pre-plant or 'starter' fertilizer when you sow the seed. There is a dramatic difference in lawns that are started with fertilizer. Select a product that is specifically for starting seed. Caution: Never use a "Weed and Feed" product as it will prevent grass seed from germinating.



STOVER SEED®

9180 San Fernando Rd. * P.O. Box 1579 * Sun Valley, CA 91353

213-626-9668 * 800-621-0315 * FAX 213-626-4920 * www.stoverseed.com

SEEDING

Be sure that you measured your area correctly and sow the seed according to the coverage listed on the product label. It is recommended that a broadcast spreader be used to insure uniform coverage. Spreading the seed by hand is not recommended but if you must, mix the seed with some kind of weed free organic matter (seed cover mulch) or soil in order to insure even coverage. Start by using a light setting on your broadcast spreader to avoid applying too much seed. Keep in mind that it is much better to go over an area two or three times when seeding rather than seeding too heavily at the start and then running out of seed.

Rake the seed lightly so it settles into the soil then cover with 1/4 inch of a quality, weed free mulch for use as a seed cover. It is important that you create good seed-to-soil contact in order to achieve establishment.

WATERING

This is the most critical step in starting a new lawn. It is very important that the surface be kept damp **AT ALL TIMES** during the germination period which can range from 1 to 4 weeks depending on the type of grass and temperature. Should the surface be allowed dry out for only a short time, the tiny grass plants will die. Naturally, the surface will need to be watered several times a day on windy and/or warm days, while in cooler temperatures a couple times a day may be sufficient. Do not allow water to puddle or run off.

MOWING

When the grass reaches about 3 inches tall begin mowing. Set the cutting edge at no less than two inches. Continue mowing at this height until the grass has filled in. Never mow more than 1/3 of the grass blade at one time as injury to the grass may result.

RENOVATING AN OLD OR THIN LAWN

All lawns at some time need to be renovated to maintain their beauty. If your lawn is basically healthy with thin and bare spots, renovation can make it look like new. To renovate an existing lawn:

1. Mow lawn as short as possible, not more than 1/2 inch high.
2. Remove thatch and debris. Should you have a heavy layer of thatch built up, you will need to rent a vertical mower or renovator to remove it. It is very important that the seed come in direct contact with the soil.
3. Aerify if the soil is hard-packed. This can be done with an aerifying machine or a hand held tool that is stepped into the ground that extracts soil cores,

4. Sow seed and pre-plant fertilizer according to the directions on the labels.
5. Cover the seed with a weed free mulch.
6. Follow watering and mowing steps above.

Note: If a weed problem exists, spray with glyphosate, wait one week, then follow steps 1-6.

MAINTENANCE FOR ESTABLISHED LAWNS

Watering Most lawn problems are a result of poor watering methods. Generally speaking, most lawns need heavy watering 1 to 2 times per week. Clay soils require less watering while sandy soils need more frequent watering. Always water early in the day.

Fertilizing After the first 2 or 3 mowings a complete lawn food may be applied. Avoid "weed and feed" fertilizers until the lawn is 3 months old. Fertilize regularly every 6 to 8 weeks during the growing seasons. Avoid fertilizing during hot weather (except warm season grasses and Dichondra). A balanced fertilizer (N-P-K) is recommended.

Mowing Recommended mowing height for most lawns is 1-1/2 to 3 inches high. However it is recommended that during the warm months (June to September) the grass be mowed to 3 to 4 inches. This reduces heat stress, water consumption and disease problems. Bermudagrass may be mowed at lower cutting heights of 1/2 to 1-1/2 inches.

THE THREE KEYS TO SUCCESS ON SEED ESTABLISHMENT:

- ◆ **Correct soil temperature**
- ◆ **Seed-to-soil contact**
- ◆ **Consistent light watering**

We guarantee that the seed we offer has been tested by a certified seed-testing laboratory and conforms to federal and state seed laws. We make no other guarantees, either express or implied. Because of varying factors beyond our control, there is no guarantee of establishment.

Because of the general nature of this advice and individual application thereof, neither the publisher nor the retailer assumes any responsibility for any loss, damage, injury or expense which may be incurred or suffered as a result of the use of this information.



STOVER SEED.

9180 San Fernando Rd. * P.O. Box 1579 * Sun Valley, CA 91353

213-626-9668 * 800-621-0315 * FAX 213-626-4920 * www.stoverseed.com