

3 Options for Lawn Renovation

Task	Overseeding Acceptable Turf	Minor Renovation (Less than 50% weeds or spot renovation)	Major Renovation (Greater than 50% weeds)
Test Soil	Obtain a soil test kit from the Extension office, and follow directions for sampling.		
Chemical Application (August)	None	<p>On patches where weeds exist, use Glyphosate, sold as <i>Roundup</i> or <i>Kleenup</i>, applied according to label directions.</p> <p>Remove dead vegetation.</p> <p>Where weeds are interspersed, use an appropriate broadleaf herbicide. Contact the Horticulture Help Desk for assistance with identifying weeds and appropriate herbicides to control them.</p>	<p>Glyphosate, sold as <i>Roundup</i> or <i>Kleenup</i>, applied according to label directions.</p> <p>Remove dead vegetation.</p>
		Note: All herbicides have a wait period between when they are applied and when seeds can be planted. Read the label for specific information about the wait time for any herbicide you use.	
Preparing the Seed Bed (at/just prior to planting)	Following irrigation or a soaking rain, 2-3 passes with a core aerator	Following irrigation or a soaking rain, 2-3 passes with a core aerator. Rough up bare areas with a garden rake	Layer total amount of recommended lime, fertilizer, and ¼-2" organic matter, before tilling to a depth of 4 - 6". Rake smooth and use a roller to ensure good seed to soil contact.
Addition of Organic Matter	Apply compost to a depth of 1/4 - 1/2"	Apply compost to a depth of 1/4 - 1/2"	
Liming	Apply lime according to soil test recommendations. If liming cannot be done at this time (your schedule doesn't permit it), lime can be applied anytime that the soil is not frozen.		

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Task	Overseeding Acceptable Turf	Minor Renovation (Less than 50% weeds or spot renovation)	Major Renovation (Greater than 50% weeds)
First Application of Fertilizer (at/just prior to planting)	Apply fertilizer as recommended in your soil test report or in your custom nutrient management plan		See above
Seeding* (September - possibly extended to November, depending on the continuance of warm weather)	Overseed at a minimum rate of 2-3 lbs/1000 sq. feet. Choose appropriate seed type. Contact the Horticulture Help Desk for assistance with identifying appropriate seed.	Same recommendations as previous column except on bare spots, which should be covered thoroughly.	Same recommendations as previous column except increase seed rate to a minimum 4-6 lbs/1000 sq. feet.
Watering	For all three options, maintain good moisture in the top 1/4 or 1/2 inch of soil. This will require several light waterings per day for 10 to 14 days after seeding when there is not adequate rainfall. The objective is not to allow the seedbed to dry out. Once the grass seedlings are up, apply 1/2 inch of water every 2 to 3 days, when rainfall is short, until the seedlings are well-established (normally 30 -35 days after seeding).		
Mowing	Begin mowing as soon as your new grass is 3 to 4 inches tall. Mow with a sharp blade and never remove more than 1/3 of blade. Recycle clippings to return nutrients to soil.		
Second Application of Fertilizer (At least 30 days after germination of new grass)	Apply fertilizer according to recommendations on your soil test reports or in your custom nutrient management plan. NOTE: Skip application if ground is frozen.		

* The closer to the beginning of September that seeding can take place, the more time the new grass has to develop it's roots system. A strong root system is critical to new turf surviving it's first summer.

If You Still Can't Grow Grass...

Have you tried and still cannot get a good stand of turf? These guidelines should assist you in restoring or upgrading your lawn. Remember, there are areas in many yards where it is extremely difficult to grow grass. This is the result of many factors including heavy shade, poor drainage, steep slopes, etc. These areas may not be suitable for establishing a stand of grass. Feel free to contact us at the Horticulture Help Line at 703 792-7747 for assistance with these difficult areas, or for more appropriate plants to grow in these spots.

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