

# Timely Turf Tips

## August 2015

**This month is starting a little on the dry side**, so remember to consistently water gardens, especially your container gardens. Having a uniform supply of moisture is helpful for all plants, but it is especially important for tomatoes, peppers, and squash. These vegetables are susceptible to blossom end rot, a disease that leads to the deterioration of the fruit end. When soil moisture levels vary greatly (too wet-too dry), the plants have problems absorbing enough calcium to prevent the disease. Consider mulching to help prevent moisture loss. If nature is not providing enough rain, you will need to supply the water. Steve uses drip irrigation on his tomatoes and peppers, ask him for advice on how to use this efficient method of providing moisture to the garden.

### August tips:

- Last month we recommended that you keep the grass 3 to 3 ½ inches tall with regular mowing. This is still true until more moisture becomes available as fall approaches.
- Lawn looking thin? 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. Stop in for information about soil sampling now so that you know the proper amount of fertilizer to add when preparing the area.
- 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 end of September 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.
- Continue to maintain the garden. Regular watering, weeding and harvesting (or removing faded flowers in the flower garden) will keep gardens productive through early autumn or later. Dispose of any overripe produce, which can attract wasps and picnic beetles to the garden. Consider donating extra garden produce to local food shelves.
- Chances are you've already harvested your garlic, if not do it now. Get more information on harvesting and curing garlic from the U of M Extension at this link: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/fruit-vegetable/growing-garlic-in-minnesota>
- Keep hand-picking Japanese Beetles. Their numbers are increasing. See us if you need other products to help controls these pests.
- 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/](http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/vegetables/planting-vegetables-midsummer-fall-harvest/)



**Steve's Garlic Harvest**

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