

Timely Turf Tips

August 2019

While timely rains have produced continued growth throughout the garden, remember to consistently water the garden. Keeping a uniform supply of water is beneficial to all plants, especially 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.

August lawn and garden tips:

- 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.
- 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.
- If your iris patch is 3-4 years old and not looking as healthy as before, divide them early this month. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum recommends using a spading fork to dig up the old plants, removing the oldest portions and replanting the new firm rhizomes from the outer portion of the mass. Add compost, peat moss, cow manure and some starter fertilizer to the bed. Trim the leaves of the plants back to 6", and plant just below ground level watering in well.
- 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.



Plant a tree. The University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum states, "Late summer is a great time to plant evergreen trees and shrubs." Remember to water evergreens regularly all fall, continuing until the ground freezes for best results.

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