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## Landscape & Nursery News

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### Mid-August is Lawn Seeding Time

By John Neyart, Horticultural Consultant

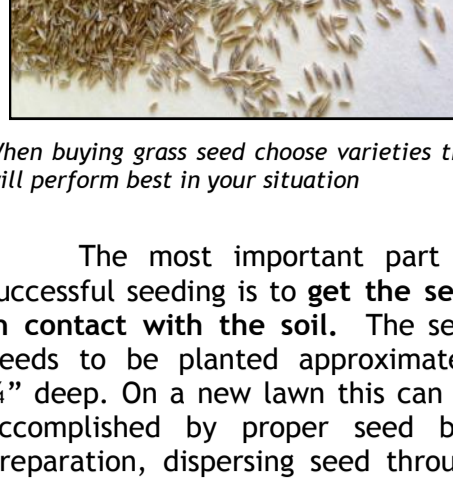
In the turf industry in the northeast, mid-August is the best time to start repairing lawns and seeding new ones. The days are getting shorter and our night temperatures are starting to cool, the soil temperatures are ideal for seed germination.

When it comes to seeding a lawn the first thing you need to do is **evaluate the area to be seeded**. You must determine what caused the lawn to decline in the past. If the failures were due to poor soil drainage or improper grading, these must be addressed first. If the area has a thin stand of desirable turf grasses, adequate drainage and few grading issues you might look at renovating the lawn.

Once you have completed the evaluation, **Get Your Soil Tested**. Our office in Freehold can help with soil testing kits. The soil test results will help with correct pH and proper fertilizer applications.

This is also a good time to **address any perennial grassy and broadleaf weeds**. Apply glyphosate, a non selective herbicide, according to the product label and follow all safety precautions. Remember to follow the directions for post application seeding time. Roundup Pro states; Turfgrass renovation should be delayed for 7 days after application to allow translocation into underground plant parts.

When it comes to **grass seed selection** you truly get what you pay for. Please refer to the Rutgers Fact Sheet **FS584 Seeding Your Lawn** <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=FS584> and **FS684 Turfgrass Seed Selection for Home Lawns**. <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=FS684> This will help you decide between drought and traffic tolerant **Tall Fescues**, low maintenance **Fine Fescues**, quickly establishing **Perennial Ryegrasses** or attractive and adaptable **Kentucky Bluegrasses**. You will also find information concerning turfgrass seed blends and mixtures. We should remember monoculture in a home lawn can lead to disease and pest problems. Diversity will also improve environmental stress tolerance. For those desiring Turfgrass Proceedings Research Reports you can spend time reading over the performance of various cultivars and selections in the New Jersey Turf Trials at <http://turf.rutgers.edu/research/reports/index.html>. You could also reference the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) at <http://www.ntep.org/>



*When buying grass seed choose varieties that will perform best in your situation*

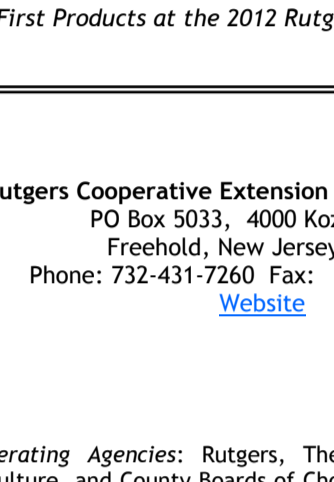
The most important part of successful seeding is to **get the seed in contact with the soil**. The seed needs to be planted approximately ¼” deep. On a new lawn this can be accomplished by proper seed bed preparation, dispersing seed through a drop spreader (ideally), raking seed in and then lightly rolling. In the case of lawn renovating this can be accomplished by using a core aerator followed by a verticutter/dethatcher or using a slice and seeder. Please refer to the Rutgers Fact Sheet **FS108 Renovating Your Lawn**.

<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=FS108>

Remember to **follow proper seeding rates**. Many people apply too much seed looking for quick results which leads to weak elongated growth susceptible to diseases like pythium blight and damping-off.

**Keeping the top 2 inches of the newly seeded lawn moist** will improve your success. This will need to be supplied through rainfall or irrigation. Using clean straw mulch where “25% of the soil is visible” can help retain soil moisture. Caution needs to be exercised not to create a muddy condition. High sunny areas will need more water. Once the seedlings get established, deeper less frequent watering will be needed. Germination rates very depending on the turfgrass type. Perennial Ryegrass in 5 to 10 days, Tall Fescue and Fine Fescue will germinate in 7 to 14 days and Kentucky Bluegrass 14 to 30 days Weeds are usually less of a problem in the fall and can be addressed in the spring. If a herbicide is needed for broadleaf weed control refer to Rutgers Fact Sheet **FS385 Broadleaf Weed Control in Cool Season Turfgrass** <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=FS385> Do not use any of these herbicides on newly-seeded turf. Wait until the new lawn has been mowed at least three times before treating (usually about 6 to 8 weeks after seedling emergence).

Take advantage of the time of year. With some work now you can have a successfully established lawn in the spring.



*Storr Tractor demonstrated the AERA-vator by First Products at the 2012 Rutgers*



*A slice and seeder like the Ryan Mataway Overseeder can be used to quickly renovate a lawn*

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