

Timely Turf Tips August 2005



Now through September 20th is the "window of opportunity" for Fall revitalization of your turf with effective fertilizer, seed and weed control programs. After a lengthy hot spell, recent rainfall and cooler temperatures bring welcome relief to stressed-out lawns and the chance to prepare grass to weather the winter months. **Hugo Feed Mill Brand 25-0-15** is our recommended Fall fertilizer for established lawns. Depending on whether you fertilize once or twice a year, you will either want to apply now and then again between October 15-31; or wait until around September 1st for a single application. To amplify the effectiveness of your fertilizer and/or to target other turf issues, you may need to go through the process of **aeration**.

Aeration is an important element in maintaining healthy turfgrass. If performed properly, it will prevent or alleviate a number of problems, including compaction and thatch build-up. It can also improve water infiltration, irrigation efficiency and air exchange. Thus, proper aeration should reduce time and expense associated with watering your lawn and promote a healthy root system. For smaller lawns, the established method of **plug aeration** should suffice. However, in recent years there have been many advances in aeration techniques. **Hugo Feed Mill** would like to bring a **customized aeration program** to your doorstep by utilizing one of the latest devices on the market today called the "AERA-VATOR". Intended for **large areas of turf** this "Solid-tine" aerator has the ability to stir and loosen the soil beneath the sod without destroying the turf on the surface. The vibration of the solid-core tines stimulates thatch decomposition and softens the soil around and between the tine holes creating more of an opening for root growth and absorption of water, air, nutrients and chemicals. By penetrating the turf and thatch layer, the unit can increase the effectiveness of fertilizers or herbicides/insecticides/fungicides. As soil compacts, grass is often invaded by various weeds and/or diseases. By customizing an aeration procedure for your lawn and helping pinpoint the best application for your particular weed control problems **Hugo Feed Mill** can help make the most of your Fall turf regimen. After your soil is loosened through one of these aeration methods, we'll help you determine the best fertilizer to apply and whether to augment with **gypsum** or **lime** (gypsum if you have clay or compacted soil; lime if you have acidic soil). **Stop in, call Steve at 651-429-3361 ext. 101 or email us hugofeed@comcast.net** to discuss these techniques or for questions regarding which herbicide (i.e., "Speed Zone", "Weed Free Zone", "Killzall") will be most effective for you.

For instance, if you've developed **large patches of solid crabgrass** in your yard, you'll want to attack the problem as soon as possible so that new seeding will be well enough established by Spring to apply "**Dimension**" crabgrass prevention. (Preferably, seeding should be completed by **September 15th**). Start by spraying the area with "**Killzall**" and waiting until it's completely brown. At that point you can either till everything up and seed or leave the dead crabgrass as mulch and use a slitseeder. **Hugo Feed Mill** can provide you with the tools and instructions you'll need to do the job right – remember, we also rent a slitseeder, ATV spreader and various other lawn equipment.

To combat other pesky turf problems you may be encountering such as **moles** we recommend a product that contains **trichlorson** such as "**Dylox**". While *it's too late in the year* to apply Grubex or Mach 2, **Dylox** and a non-insecticide product called **Molemax** can still provide relief.

There is also the standard method of extermination by **trapping**. We carry several types of traps and can instruct you on proper usage.

As always, **Hugo Feed Mill** appreciates your patronage throughout the year and we look forward to working with you on Fall projects. Look for our final **Timely Turf Tips** of 2005 coming your way Mid-October with tips on preparing for another Minnesota winter.

Have a great Fall!

Timely Turf Tip



"Ed Says"

Ed at **Hugo Mill Outdoor Power** reminds you that while it's okay to lower your mower deck to 2 1/2 - 3 inches in height going into fall, you want to make sure your **blades** are **sharp** to avoid turf damage.

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