

Care and Feeding of Your Lawn without Chemicals

Several chemical products (approved for lawn usage) contain 2,4-D to kill weeds. 2,4-D is a known carcinogen.

You can have a healthy lawn and (relatively) free of weeds without harmful chemicals by simply raising your lawn mower blade to cut at 2.5 inches. Longer grass does not allow weeds (that need light) to germinate, and yet the grass grows well (and thick). Areas that are not mowed can be planted with clover or alfalfa (these are legumes). These plants shade germinating weed seeds plus enrich the soil naturally.

Gardeners should use black polyvinyl plastic to shade out germinating weed seeds. Mulching the area around shrubs and small trees with sawdust, bark, pine needles, limestone chips, or similar materials effectively keep unwanted plants at bay. This practice also reduces competition for soil moisture.

A highly recommended 100% natural (organic) fertilizer for the lawn is Milorganite®. One advantage is that it won't burn the lawn as easily as other fertilizers...if you apply it wrong. The bag instructions recommend three feeding cycles per year. Follow the directions. (Note: Feedings times are on the bag... three times a year, and easy to remember: Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Thanksgiving Day.)

Another lawn tip is to plant grass seed in August for best results (seems strange to plant in the heat of the Summer, but it is the recommended planting time).

My lawn took two years to recover from cutting it too short (I never used chemicals since I react adversely to them). However, my grass never grew well (I have sandy soil). By following the advise of a greens keeper (a "Doctor of Grass" from Michigan State), my lawn is looking better than ever.

Oh yes, stubborn weeds are extracted by hand.

**Mow Grass Higher (2 -- 2.5 inches)
Use Milorganite® as perscribed on the
label three times a year
Seed in August**

Give the above a try... and, be patient! It may take a year or so to see results.

Golfers: Do not put your golf ball in your mouth, or even near it (as President Clinton did on national TV). Most golf courses use chemicals on their grass. (What a dumb habit anyway!)

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Note: Milorganite® costs about nine dollars for forty pounds (this covers approximately 2500 square feet).



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