Country Green
TURF FARMS
7725 Yelm Hwy. SE; Olympia, WA 98513

FERTILIZER TIPS

NEW SOD LAWNS

For new sod, it is critical to get the roots established first. A fertilizer with an adequate amount of phosphorus is best. Apply fertilizer with a listing of 16-16-16 (rate: 6.5 lbs / 1000 sq. ft.) or 10-20-20 (rate: 10 lbs / 1000 sq. ft.), or similar starter fertilizer, to the bare ground and then water it into the soil before installing the turf sod to help establish the roots. (*Look on the back of this sheet for additional information on fertilizer!*) A light application of 16–16-16 or equivalent fertilizer applied within the first month of installing the turf sod and about 4–6 weeks after that will help maintain a healthy lawn. After 2–3 applications of starter fertilizer, follow the guidelines for established lawns. When applying fertilizer it is best to apply to a dry lawn, then water in well to reduce the chance of burning the lawn.

NEW SEEDED LAWNS

For seeded lawns (either hydroseeding or hand seeded) it is important to supply starter fertilizer at the time of seeding. Country Green's Hydroseeding includes 16–16–16 starter fertilizer. Apply an application after the new lawn has been mowed once or twice (about 30 days after seeding). Fertilize your new lawn, then again about 30 days later. After that, follow the guidelines for established lawns.

ESTABLISHED LAWNS

For established lawns, aim toward 4–5 fertilizer applications per year (each one supplying about 1 lb. of actual Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.). Recommended applications dates are as follows but can vary depending on weather (especially early spring and/or late fall). These are general guidelines to follow. Fewer or more applications may be necessary depending upon soil type, weather conditions, etc. Remember to apply fertilizer to a dry lawn, then water in well as soon as possible.

EARLY to MID-MARCH	**Spring fertilizer, with moss control if needed (12-2-8)**
LATE APRIL orEARLY MAY	**Quick release (such as 16–16–16)**
MID to LATE JUNE	**Summer fertilizer (such as 28–7–14 w/ slow release)**
EARLY SEPTEMBER	**Summer fertilizer or quick release fertilizer**
MID NOVEMBER	**Fall fertilizer, with moss control if needed.**

If weeds develop, avoid "Weed and Feeds" (fertilizer and herbicide mixtures). When watered in, the herbicides wash into the roots and can burn them. For best results, use a liquid herbicide spray (such as Ortho *Weed-B-Gone* or equivalent) and let it dry completely for 24 hours before watering the lawn.

Do NOT apply weed killers to newly seeded lawns until 3 months old.

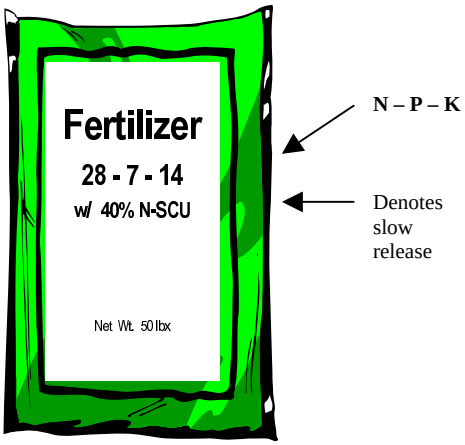
TROUBLESHOOTING

- "My lawn is yellow or light green". It is time to fertilize. An overall yellowing of the lawn indicates nutrient deficiency.
- "I fertilized, but there are stripes in my lawn". Usually indicated by uneven application of fertilizer. If you are using a drop spreader, apply half the rate, then turn 90º and apply the second half perpendicular to the first application. This will reduce the chance of skips and overlaps resulting in a more even greening up of your lawn.

- "I fertilized my lawn, but am not seeing any response." This could be due to several factors. Make sure the correct amount was applied and that enough time has passed from the time of application (4 to 7 days). Other factors could be a lack of water, soil compaction, too low of soil pH, lack of soil microbial activity (a problem especially in really wet soils, or during winter months) or high amount of wood product in the soil (this tends to tie up the nutrients, making them unavailable to the turf).

WHAT DO THE NUMBERS ON THE BAG MEAN?

All fertilizers have a chemical listing of N-P-K. Which means that a fertilizer listing of 28-7-14, for example, is 28% Nitrogen, 7% Phosphorous, and 14% Potassium. Some fertilizers contain trace elements, slow release nitrogen, and organic sources of nutrients.



N = Nitrogen (N). Nitrogen is the first number in the analysis on the bag. Nitrogen is a component of chlorophyll (responsible for green color of plants) and is required for nearly all growth processes in turf. Nitrogen is important for new and established lawns. Top growth occurs at the expense of root growth, so excessive amounts of Nitrogen can restrict root growth. Quick release and slow release types available (i.e. Picture shows a fertilizer with slow release.

P = Phosphorous (P_2O_5). Phosphorous is the second number in the analysis. This nutrient is for root development and is especially important for young turf. The rapid growth associated with germination requires phosphorous, therefore it is essential in starter fertilizers. Less is required in established turf.

K = Potassium (K_2O). Potassium, also known as Potash) is associated with the plants ability to withstand stress. When supplied to the plant along with adequate amounts of Nitrogen, potassium thickens the cell wall. This makes the plant better able to withstand drought, insects, disease and cold.

HOW MUCH DO I USE?

Follow the label rates on the bag. You can calculate this yourself also. The amount of fertilizer to apply to established lawns is based on the nitrogen level. The recommended amount of Nitrogen to apply for Western Washington is 4–6 pounds of *"actual nitrogen"* per 1000 sq. ft. per year. Fertilizer should be applied in 4–6 applications per year, each one providing approximately 1 lb. of actual Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.. The nutrients on a bag of fertilizer are expressed as a true percentage by weight.

*Example: 16-16-16 contains 16% of N, 16% P_2O_5 and 16% K_2O. This means that every **100 lbs.** Of 16-16-16 contains 16% or 16 lbs of N, 16 lbs. of K_2O. (i.e. 100 lb. x .16 (16% expressed as a decimal) = 16 lbs.). A **50 lb.** bag would contain 8 lbs. of each major nutrient (i.e. 50 lb. x .16 = 18 lbs.).*