



COMMON CAUSES OF GRASS SEEDING FAILURES

Seeding your lawn can vary from a simple "fill in a few areas" to "I'm ripping it up and starting over." TALK ABOUT EXTREMES!!

For most homeowners, seeding is a challenge with large areas being quite the chore. Here are the most common reasons for seeding failures:



SEED TO SOIL CONTACT: simply throwing grass seed on bare ground and expecting it to germinate and grow does not work. The ground needs to be loose by at least an inch or two; working seed lightly into the soil (the *Garden Weasel* is an excellent tool to loosen soil in small areas). This works **ONLY IF THE SOIL IS NOT COMPACTED**. Consider using *Seed Aide- Cover Grow* (for moisture retention) and *Ferti-lome New Lawn Starter Fertilizer* to aid germination and growth before the next fertilization.



ADDING SOIL ON TOP OF HARD GROUND: A common assumption is that adding soil on top of compacted areas is enough for seed to germinate and grow to become a healthy lawn. Seed may germinate and look fine for a short time. But, once the root system reaches the compacted layers, it no longer increases root depth to take in water and plant nutrients it needs to survive.

WATERING UNTIL SEED GERMINATES THEN QUIT WATERING: Don't forget that in fall or spring new seed must be kept wet or it will die. Also, watering must continue after germination. At this stage seedlings are increasing leaf and root growth so decrease watering frequency but increase depth. Young grass seed will wilt as soon as it runs short of water. Give it a drink if wilting occurs.



NOT FOLLOWING UP WITH FERTILIZER: The reason behind using a Starter Fertilizer at seeding is that germinating grass seed has a high demand for phosphorus. Starter Fertilizers are designed for this purpose. About 2-3 weeks after germination, young grass shifts its nutritional need to nitrogen. This means applying a high nitrogen fertilizer early October (*Ferti-lome Lawn Food plus Iron*) and *Ferti-lome Winterizer* in late October/ November (when the grass is still green but you are about done mowing). For spring seeding a follow up feeding with Milorganite is suggested.



***HERBICIDES:** Virtually all herbicides have restrictions on how soon you can seed after they are applied, or when you can apply them after seeding. **ALWAYS READ AN HERBICIDE LABEL BEFORE YOU PLAN TO SEED.**

Soil Service Garden Center, Inc.

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