

## **ADD ORGANIC MATTER, i.e. Fertilizers**

If your lawn is in decline and you need to “jump start” the organic process, begin by applying ½ to 1 inch of compost (or humic acid at 7 to 10 pounds per 1000 square feet), as well as 40 pounds of lava sand, 20 pounds of Texas greensand and 5 pounds of molasses per 1000 square feet.

To begin a regular fertilization program, apply Redenta's Organic Fertilizer at the rate of 20 pounds per 1000 square feet three times a year (February, June and October). Foliar feed, starting in February, every two months with a mixture of Garrett Juice or John's Recipe (4 tablespoons per gallon) and Agrispon (1 teaspoon per gallon) for each 1000 square feet. Remember to always foliar feed early in the morning or late in the evening (avoid the hot afternoon sun).

## **MOWING**

Mow often (at least weekly). Summer grasses should be cut no lower than 2 ½ inches; 3 ½ to 4 inches would be even better. Use a mulching mower – this will add organic matter to the soil and save you a lot of work. Hint: Keeping the lawn mowed frequently in the early spring is an effective tool in preventing weed seeds from forming.

## **WATERING**

One inch of water a week is recommended for most of our heavy clay soils in North Texas in as few waterings as possible. Frequent watering encourages shallow roots and unhealthy grass. Slowly increase the duration of your watering and decrease the frequency. Learn how your sprinkler system works. Place rain gauges or tuna cans with 1” marked on the inside and find out how long it really takes for your sprinkler system to provide 1 inch of water at various places in your yard – you will be surprised at the differences. Gardeners with sandy soils may have to water more – as much as 1½ inches a week. Remember to take into account the rain nature provides – that counts too!

## **WEEDS, ETC.**

Relax! One man's weed is another man's flower. If you faithfully follow our organic practices you will develop a healthy lawn and weeds really will disappear. In the meanwhile, hand weeding is still the best technique – and great exercise! You can spot treat with 20% vinegar on hot, sunny days (not as effective in sandy soils).

Corn gluten meal is a high nitrogen fertilizer and has been used as an organic pre-emergent herbicide. Application (at 20 pounds per 1000 square feet) is best done in the early spring (February 15 – March 15) and again in the early fall (September 15 – October 15, when nighttime temperatures are back in the 60's). Water it in well and then hold off on watering for a couple of weeks.

One of the best ways of not seeing those nasty spring weeds is to overseed in October with perennial rye at 7-10 pounds per 1000 square feet. Mow your grass short and top-dress bare areas with ½ inch of compost to give the seed a base to grow on. You will be adding organic matter to your soil, you will have a lush green lawn all winter long and whatever weeds that do manage to grow you will not notice because your lawn will be green! Remember not to apply corn gluten meal if you plan to overseed – it will prevent the germination of the rye seed.

Grass burs can be eliminated by applying humic acid (5-7 pounds per 1000 square feet) in the fall and corn gluten meal (20 pounds per 1000 square feet) around March 1<sup>st</sup>. Continue with our dedicated organic program – grass burs love poor soils.

## **OTHER PROBLEMS**

Fungal diseases such as brown patch (large circular areas of grass that turn brown and die) are quite commonly caused by overwatering, poor drainage and excessive nitrogen. Correct those habits, clean up the dead grass and top-dress with ½ inch of compost. Apply corn meal w/garlic at 20 pounds per 1000 square feet.

Gray leaf spot in St. Augustine can be cured by a potassium bicarbonate spray (1 rounded tablespoon per gallon of water). Top-dress with ½ inch of compost.

## **BAD BUGS**

Grubworms (C-shaped, fat, white larvae of the June bug) sometimes do eat the roots of grass to a point that the turf can be easily lifted from the lawn. But they are seldom a real problem in a healthy organic lawn; they are just busy feeding on decomposing material. If you have more than ten to a square foot area, treat with beneficial nematodes while the grubs are still present. Water the soil well before and after application for best results. Clean up the dead grass and top-dress with ½ inch of compost.

Chinch bugs suck plant sap and cause grass to turn yellow during hot, dry summers. These tiny 1/6” dark pests smell bad, especially when stepped on. Dust affected area with diatomaceous earth or spray area with orange oil (2 ounces/gallon) and Garrett Juice or John's Recipe. Clean up any dead grass and top-dress with ½ inch of compost. Check to make sure those parts of the lawn are receiving adequate water.

## REDEANTA'S CARE

If you're having difficulty finding the time to stay on top of your landscape maintenance we can help.

### Organic Fertilization Service

Five visits during the year beginning in early Spring and finishing in Fall

### GardenMaintain

Includes the Fertilization Service plus:

- Trimming
- Weeding
- Mulching
- Irrigation checkup
- Extra feeding for flowering plants
- Inspections by specialist

### Contact

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## LAWN CARE

Organic lawn care is more than just changing the brand of fertilizer that you use – it is an understanding that we cannot control but rather must encourage nature. Create a healthy, fertile, well-drained soil and your lawn will flourish. Select the proper grasses. Not all insects are pests. Troublesome weeds hate healthy organic lawns and there are simple, safe, organic solutions to diseases should they arise. By becoming aware of every action you take, you can have a lawn that will require minimal care, will be beautiful, and will be environmentally safe for you, your children and your pets to play barefoot in the grass.

### AERATION

Have you ever noticed how green and healthy the grass looks in the spots where trenches were dug to lay sprinkler pipes even weeks after a new sprinkler system has been installed? Why? Air has been added to compacted soil. Air contains oxygen, carbon dioxide, nitrogen and other minerals that are essential for plant roots to develop and for the many beneficial soil microorganisms to do their job – decompose organic matter. Have a professional aeration done or poke holes in the lawn with a hand aerator.



redenta's

for the modern gardener

SHOP

DESIGN

CARE