



POST-SEEDING CARE SHEET

There are three main tasks when it comes to post-seeding care of your lawn: irrigation, fertilization, and mowing. Properly performing these cultural practices is vital to the long term success and health of your new lawn.

IRRIGATION

Irrigation is the most critical of the cultural practices. Irrigation can be broken down into two separate procedures:

1. Watering to encourage germination.
2. Backing off the irrigation so the grass will establish itself.

To get the seed to germinate evenly and efficiently, the seed bed must be kept moist. Water to the point where puddles start to form. If there is adequate rainfall and the temperatures are moderate, the seed will germinate without irrigation. Do not allow the seed bed to dry out. Also, **DO NOT** water late in the day if it is hot. Allowing standing water overnight in hot weather could allow diseases to attack the young seedlings. Keep up this practice of constant moisture until 75% of your seed has germinated. Complete germination can take up to 21 days depending on the variety of grass seed used. Once you have reached 75% germination, it is time to change your watering practices. This should entail watering less frequently but watering longer. Cut back to watering once a day, then every other day. The goal is to dry out the top inch of your soil, but maintain moisture below. This forces the grass plant's roots to search for the moisture and grow downward. Watering too frequently after germination will cause unwanted weeds to grow in the grass. **Some weeds will germinate along with the grass seed, but backing off watering at the right time will keep weeds to a minimum.**

MOWING

After the seed has successfully germinated and the plant is actively growing, it is time to think about mowing. Mowing should be started when the majority of plants have reached three inches. Don't wait until all the plants grow. Mowing will force tillering which will let the turf stand establish quicker. No more than 1/3 of the leaf blade should be removed at any one time. The cutting height should be not shorter than 2.5 inches. Ensure your blades are sharp and well maintained. A young leaf is soft and will tend to rip or even can be pulled out of the ground by a dull mower blade. The clippings should be allowed to blend back into the turf.

FERTILIZATION / WEED CONTROL

As the turf grass is establishing, fertilizer should be applied at one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. This should be done twice in the first sixty days. This addition of nitrogen is critical in helping the plant develop more leaves and spread and thicken. Do not apply any herbicides until the turf has been mowed several times. **Remember that some weed competition is nature, particularly with spring plantings. Be patient and delay using weed killers until the grass is mature enough to handle the stress.**

Remember, you are dealing with a perishable product. In almost all cases if there is a problem, it is not the seed that did not germinate, but the plant did not survive.