

South Dakota State University

# Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange

---

SDSU Extension Fact Sheets

SDSU Extension

---

1967

## Lawns for South Dakota

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_fact](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact)

---

### Recommended Citation

South Dakota State University, Cooperative Extension, "Lawns for South Dakota" (1967). *SDSU Extension Fact Sheets*. 1028.

[https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension\\_fact/1028](https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact/1028)

This Fact Sheet is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in SDSU Extension Fact Sheets by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact [michael.biondo@sdstate.edu](mailto:michael.biondo@sdstate.edu).

# Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



For current policies and practices, contact SDSU Extension

Website: [extension.sdstate.edu](http://extension.sdstate.edu)

Phone: 605-688-4792

Email: [sdsu.extension@sdstate.edu](mailto:sdsu.extension@sdstate.edu)

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture.



*Lawns  
for  
South  
Dakota*

**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

# Lawns for South Dakota

by DEAN MARTIN, extension horticulturist

## SOIL

Soil for lawns should be high in organic content—peat, well-rotted manure, and compost are good—to conserve moisture. A rich loam with at least 4 inches of topsoil is good lawn turf soil.

An ideal seedbed can be prepared with various types of equipment, but the important accomplishment is a properly graded—firm, but not packed—soil. A seedbed with a gradation of soil particle sizes up to an inch in diameter is ideal for receiving the seed, necessary waterings, and for reducing topsoil erosion.

## FERTILIZER

Apply fertilizer at the rate of 2 pounds actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Work this into the soil as you prepare the new seedbed.

Fertilizer requirements for choice, established lawns range from 4 to 6 pounds actual nitrogen per year. Apply in not less than 2 properly timed treatments. Cool-season grasses, as the name implies, make their most vigorous growth in spring and fall; fertilizer applied in March and August is available to the grass then most needed. Organic fertilizers are recommended for use on the lawn during summer months when grass is growing less vigorously.

## SEED

Kentucky bluegrass is the best recommended lawn turf for most areas of South Dakota. However, it will require supplemental water of suitable quality during periods of extended drought, and it does not tolerate constant, heavy shade.

In moist, sunny areas a seed mixture of 60 per cent Kentucky bluegrass, 30 per cent Creeping Red fescue, and 10 per cent Redtop is suggested.

For heavily shaded areas a mixture of 60 per cent Creeping Red Fescue, 30 per cent Kentucky bluegrass, and 10 per cent Redtop is superior. Packaged seed

A well-established lawn is the basis of beautiful home grounds. Suitable soil, adapted grasses, adequate moisture, proper mowing, regular feeding, and any necessary pest control operations all contribute to making a lawn attractive.

mixtures closely equaling these percentages are available, or the individual species can be purchased and mixed at home. About 3 pounds of seed mixture per 1,000 square feet is sufficient.

In drier areas the Fairway strain of crested wheatgrass is recommended. This is a bunch-type grass. Use up to 8 pounds of seed per 1,000 square feet to establish the best turf.

Buffalograss often is used satisfactorily in extremely dry areas. Seed treated to facilitate planting is available. Sow at the rate of 2 pounds per 1,000 square feet. If Buffalograss sod is available, a lawn may be established by planting sod plugs of uniform size in check-rows. In some areas it will be necessary to rely on native grasses.

## SEEDING AND WATERING

Uniform seed distribution is of utmost importance. A light raking may be necessary to place a thin soil layer over the seed. Several thorough, but gentle, applications of water each day may be necessary to keep the seeds moist during the critical 10- to 20-day germination period.

Keep soil moist throughout at least the top 8 inches on established lawns. This is best accomplished with periodic soaking rather than frequent, light sprinklings.

## SODDING

Establishing a new lawn by sodding generally is more expensive than starting a lawn from seed. However, sodding provides the advantage of immediate results. In some cases, such as steep slopes, it often is very difficult to establish a lawn by seeding, and the use of sod is desirable. Soil preparation for sodding is the same as for seeding.

In some localities it is possible to have sod laid by commercial operators. It also is possible to pur-

chase cut sod, haul it, and lay it yourself. For best results sod to be cut should have received good turf grass cultural care, have a dense growth, and be free of weeds.

In order to do a good job of laying sod, cut it with straight sides and uniform thickness. After the sod has been placed, water well and roll it to provide for firm contact of root area with soil.

### MOWING

Clip the grass to height of 1¼ to 2 inches and remove clippings. Mowing actually does not benefit the grass—it merely gives the lawn a neat appearance. The importance of a sharp mower cannot be over-emphasized.

### PEST AND WEED CONTROL

Pests of turf grass include insects, rodents, weeds, and diseases.

Many soil insects can be controlled with chlordane; this will often eliminate rodent damage, as well, such as that caused by moles.

Most annual, broad-leaved weeds can be controlled with 2,4-D weed killer. Avoid the use of this material when there is a possibility that it may drift to desirable broad-leaved shrubs and ornamental plants. Several materials are available for the control of an-

nual grassy weeds. Commercial products are available also that contain insecticides and herbicides along with fertilizer.

Among common fungus diseases of lawns are Brown Patch, Leafspots, rust, and Snowmold. As with all diseases, prevention is the best recommendation for control. Special and broad-spectrum fungicides are available at most garden supply centers.

For additional information on pest control secure "Lawn Diseases and How to Control Them," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 61, USDA; "Lawn Insects and How to Control Them," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 35, USDA; and "Controlling Lawn Weeds with Herbicides," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 79. All are available at County Extension Service offices.

Contact your County Extension Agent for the most recent pest control recommendations.

### CAUTION

In all cases when using poisonous pest control materials, be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions which appear on the container label. Keep these materials under lock and key or in a safe place away from children, irresponsible persons, pets and other animals.

Ask for these horticulture fact sheets at your County Extension Office . . .

- FS 322 Growing Annual Flowers in South Dakota
- FS 323 Growing Perennial Flowers in South Dakota
- EC 657 Landscape Planning for Farm and Home
- EC 607 Ornamental Trees and Shrubs for Landscape Planting in South Dakota

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension Service, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914 in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture.  
John T. Stone, Dean of Extension, South Dakota State University.  
5M-2-67—Replaces FS 54—File: 7.5-1—5590



Lawn  
for  
South  
Dakota