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NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:

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Lawn Establishment—What You Need To Know!

Establishing a new lawn is certainly not rocket science, but one should recognize that there are essential steps to make certain you do it right the first time to have a quality lawn. Selecting the correct lawn grass for your site is the first step. Lawn grasses do differ and each has its own strengths and weaknesses (i.e. tolerances to shade, pests, traffic, cold, drought, etc.) As for timing, spring is a great season to install warm season grasses due to the relatively mild temperatures, and you have the entire growing season to grow the lawn in.

Pay close attention to your soil and the manner in which you prepare it for planting. Helpful hints include: remove the debris or old sod layers, control the weeds, take a soil sample for analysis, modify your soil with amendments (if needed), apply the correct fertilizer at the proper rate, cultivate/till your soil, maintain proper surface drainage contours throughout your site, level the soil (smooth), and firm up the seedbed. Remember that seedbed preparation is essentially the same whether seeding or sodding. Don't be tempted to take short cuts! Try to establish the lawn the correct way the first time! A good recommendation is to have at least 6 inches of soil for your lawn. After you have installed/planted your lawn grass, roll the area and immediately begin to irrigate. You will need light, frequent irrigations in the beginning so as to keep the area moist (not saturated). Then, as the grass roots penetrate into the soil, you can gradually change to a deeper and more infrequent watering schedule to promote a deep and healthy root system. Warning: It is not recommended to use pre-emergent or post-emergent herbicides during the grow-in stage, especially when seeding. With sod, pre-emergence and some post-emergent herbicides can be used, but expect some injury or delay in establishment. It is best to achieve excellent weed control prior to planting with products like Roundup or Finale.

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