

NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:

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NOW IS THE TIME FOR LAWN WEED CONTROL AND FERTILIZATION

Now is the best time to apply pre-emergent herbicides for controlling annual grassy and broadleaf weeds in lawns. Winter weeds generally start germinating in September.

Once the annual weeds germinate and start to grow, most of the pre-emergent herbicides will have no effect on the weed. Application of a pre-emergent herbicide is the most effective method to control the winter annual grassy weeds. If winter annual grassy weeds are allowed to become established in the lawn, there isn't a real good post-emergent control.

While post-emergent herbicides such as Roundup and Finale can be used to control winter grassy weeds, these products should only be used once the warm season turfgrasses are completely dormant. In many areas of Texas, these warm season turfgrasses do not go completely dormant and applying products such as Roundup and/or Finale can cause serious injury to the lawn.

When purchasing a pre-emergent herbicide, read the label very carefully to make sure the herbicide is labeled for the type of turfgrass to be treated. Also, read the label to determine how much herbicide is needed to treat the lawn. Over-applying the herbicide can injure turfgrass plants.

Once the herbicide is applied, then water the application in very thoroughly. It takes approximately 0.5 inches of supplemental irrigation to move the herbicide down in contact with the top layer of the soil where most of the weed seed are germinating.

One of the most common reasons for failure to achieve good weed control is not watering the herbicide in thoroughly. Also, following application make sure the material is watered in thoroughly before the lawn is mowed. If the lawn is mowed before the product is watered in thoroughly, then control of the weeds will be disrupted.

Now is also the time to fertilize our home lawns. Fall application of fertilizer IS the most critical to home lawns in East Texas. If you were given the option of applying fertilizer only once a year to a lawn, the best choice would be a fall application.

Fall fertilization is applied when shoot growth slows and the necessity for lawn manicuring lengthens from a weekly ritual to an every 10-14 day ordeal. Because of favorable environmental conditions (cool temperatures, short days, and high light intensity) nitrogen fertilizer applied at this time aids the photosynthetic production of carbohydrates. These carbohydrates are stored for use the following growing season, providing earlier spring green-up and an energy source for turf grasses

to recuperate from winter adversities.

The best nutrient ratios for fall fertilizer are 3-1-2 and 4-1-2. One of the most common analysis of fertilizers used is 15-5-10. Generally you will need a 40 pound of fertilizer for each 6000 square foot of lawn area. The slow release nitrogen fertilizers are not beneficial in the fall and are not economical to use. In the fall the nitrogen should be available to the grass quickly so that fertilizer elements can be taken into the plant and utilized rapidly while the plant system is still actively growing.

Additional information on home lawns can be located on the Gregg County Extension Web page at gregg-co@tamu.edu. Click on the link Aggie Turf.

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