

October 2014
Volume 5, Issue 10



Coming Events



Thurs., Oct. 9th, 10:00a

Hydroponics

Sat., Oct. 18, 8:00a

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day



Thurs., Oct. 23rd, 10:00a

**Composting—NEW!*

Mon., Oct. 27,

DEADLINE to order from 4-H Fall Plant Sale (*visit our website*)

Mon., November 3

DEADLINE to apply for the Master Gardener Class of 2015 (*See p.5*)



Release your Inner Gardener and help me get out of these weeds!

See page 5

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The Mowing Starts With the Sowing.



October brings cooler temperatures and hopefully some much needed rain. While it has been a dry summer, we have had enough rain to keep most lawns looking fairly good. Of course there are the ever present brown patch problems that need to be addressed soon. I plan to transition my lawn from bermudagrass to fescue this fall, but I must admit to having mixed feelings. I have had a bermudagrass lawn for several years so I do look forward to having nice green grass this winter. On the other hand, because I started spraying out the bermudagrass in mid-June, I haven't had to mow the lawn in over three months. Unfortunately dead grass looks pretty bad so I guess I have no choice but to grow some grass and start mowing again. Well it was nice while it lasted.

Tall fescue is the most popular turf grass in our area. It may brown out some in the summer, but gives us more months of good green color than a warm season grass like bermudagrass. Fescue is a cool season grass and that makes fall the best time for fescue seeding. Fall seeding will allow the turf to grow and become well established before next summer. Fescue lawns that have suffered from drought and brown patch disease this summer are prime candidates for over seeding this fall. Over seeding an existing lawn in the fall is a good way to increase the thickness and quality of your fescue lawn.

**Replaces Plants with Fall/Winter Interest*

Grass Seed Is Grass Seed, Right? Not so Fast...

Unfortunately, buying grass seed is not as simple as it would seem. Contrary to the ads you have seen on TV, there is not a grass seed that will grow everywhere. There just isn't a grass that will grow in sun or shade, never needs mowing or fertilizing and



chokes out all weeds. If it sounds too good to be true then it most likely is. It may germinate and look decent this winter, but will most likely die out next summer.

Try to ignore the brand names and

pretty pictures on the bag and go straight to the seed label. The print may be tiny, but the seed label tells the whole story. Look for varieties of fescue that have been tested and that are recommended for our area. For full sun lawns I recommend buying grass seed that is a blend of two or three recommended varieties. The advantage of the blend is that if one variety performs poorly in a particular area in the yard there are other varieties in the blend that may do better. A complete list of recommended tall fescue grass seed varieties can be found at the following link.

http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/PDFFiles/005610/2014_Recommended_Tall_Fescue_Cultivars_for_North_Carolina.pdf

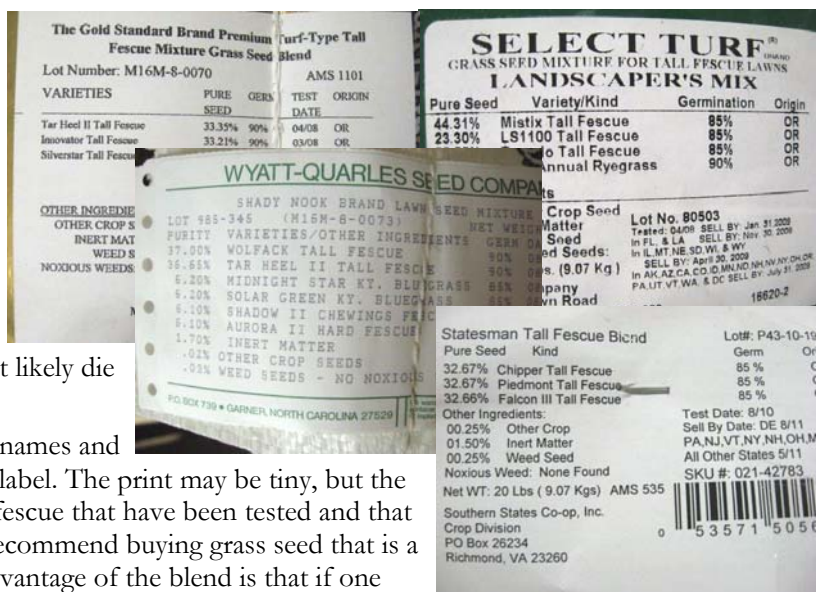
If you have a shady lawn, then the recommendation is to use a grass seed mixture of both tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass. The bluegrass performs better in the shade and will help fill in the areas where the fescue is a little weak. If you have some shady spots and some sunny spots there is no need to buy two different grass seeds. The tall fescue seed in the shady mixture will do nicely in the sunny spots where the bluegrass is weaker. The list of recommended Kentucky bluegrass varieties can be found here:

http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/PDFFiles/005609/2014_Recommended_Kentucky_Bluegrass_Cultivars_for_North_Carolina.pdf

It is impossible to tell you everything you need to know about your lawn in a short article, but the Cooperative Extension publication *Carolina Lawns* is a complete guide to lawn care in our area. It has information on variety selection, planting dates, fertilization and more. You can pick up a copy at our office or download the online version at the following link.

http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/PDFFiles/004175/Carolina_Lawns.pdf

If you have any questions about your lawn or any other gardening topic, please give me or Chris a call.



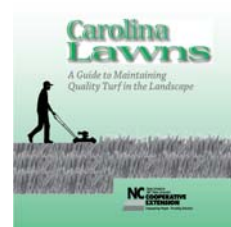
Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day

The next Collection Day will be Saturday, October 18, from 8 am until 1 pm at 100 Stone Quarry Road, Haw River. The types of hazardous waste that will be accepted are as follows:

- ☺ Household cleaners, drain openers, toilet bowl cleaners, oven cleaners, disinfectants
- ☺ Solvents, thinners, shellacs, varnishes, sealers, wood preservatives
- ☺ Automotive products including brake fluid, antifreeze, used motor oil up to 5 gal, filters, gasoline
- ☺ Pesticides
- ☺ Miscellaneous materials such as acids, bases, kerosene, batteries, photographic chemicals, pool chemicals, mercury, fluorescent tubes
- ☺ Latex and oil based paint and spray paint

☹ **The following will NOT be accepted:** Gas cylinders, radioactives/smoke detectors, medical waste, electronics/TVs/computers, explosives/ammunition

If you have questions contact the Landfill at 376-8902 or Cooperative Extension



October Garden Tips



Plant pansies now, adding a slow-release fertilizer for better flower displays during warm spells over winter. Wait until after the first freeze to mulch the beds.



October is the right time to plant new trees and shrubs. Dig the planting hole three times as wide but no deeper than the root ball of the plant. Loosen a tight root ball and plant so the top of the root ball is about one inch above the soil line to allow for settling. Check for good drainage and water plants thoroughly as you backfill with a fifty-fifty mix of organic matter and native soil.



There's still time to plant a green manure cover crop for a more productive garden next season! For a small garden, annual crimson clover is a good choice. Plant five ounces per 1,000 square feet. If your garden is larger and you have access to serious equipment to till in the dense root systems, try a small grain such as oats or wheat. If you've ever reseeded a bare patch in your lawn, you can plant a cover crop. Work up the soil gently with a garden rake, broadcast the seed over the soil, then rake it in. In the spring, till the cover crop into the soil.



For a great lawn without excessive mowing, feed established cool-season lawns just three times between September and February. (September-November-January or October-December-February). Apply 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn area at each feeding.

To determine how much fertilizer you will need to spread to get one pound of nitrogen, you'll need to do a little garden math: The three numbers displayed on a bag of fertilizer represent the percentages of the three main nutrients (Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium) contained in that bag. For example, a bag of 17-17-17 fertilizer contains 17 percent nitrogen, 17 percent phosphorus and 17 percent potassium. To apply one pound of actual nitrogen, divide 1 pound by the percentage contained in the bag; in this case, $1 \div 0.17 = 5.88$. You will need to apply 5.88 pounds of 17-17-17 fertilizer per 1,000 square feet to achieve the recommended 1 pound of actual nitrogen.

Dig, divide and replant spring and summer-blooming perennials now. Daylilies, hostas, Shasta daisies, iris and peonies will benefit from the division and

have time to become established before spring.

Cold-loving annuals can be planted now. Sweet peas, poppies, Bells of Ireland, forget-me-nots and larkspur are just a few that can't take the heat but shine when there's a chill in the air.

Take cuttings from your woody herbs, dip in rooting hormone and plant in moist, well-drained medium. Lemon balm, oregano, sage, rosemary, tarragon and thyme are all good candidates for your winter windowsill garden.

If you have had a soil test done and the results suggest the addition of lime, this is an excellent time to do it. Winter rains and alternating freezes and thaws will help incorporate the lime into the soil.

Begin to plant spring-flowering bulbs now. Jonquils and daffodils are virtually vole-proof, but it's hard to deny the splendor of tulips! Try planting them in strawberry baskets buried in the ground, use hardware cloth to exclude the critters or mix Permatill – a sharp, pea-sized gravel – into the fill around the bulb.

Arbor Gate plant of the Month



Aromatic Aster

Hooray! It's aster season! Among our favorites here at Arbor Gate Garden is the North Carolina native, *Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*, specifically the variety "Raydon's Favorite". Rather than the flowers, the common name 'Aromatic Aster' comes from the foliage, which releases a pleasant, minty scent when crushed. "Raydon's Favorite" has proven to be a dependable herbaceous perennial that puts on a wonderful fall flower show. This 3' tall by 2-3' wide mounding aster is covered with blue-purple simple ray flowers throughout October. The yellow-centered blooms provide a late-season source of nectar for bees and butterflies and are a brilliant foil for late-blooming yellow sunflowers. Grow in full sun to part shade and well-drained moist to dry soil. Aromatic Aster stands up well to drought. Propagate by division in the Spring or Fall or take cuttings in early Summer. Here are a few more facts:

http://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs_syob.pdf

Symphyotrichum oblongifolium



Release Your Inner Gardener!



- Do you want to learn more about the culture and care of many types of plants?
- Are you eager to participate in an intense, practical training program?
- Do you look forward to sharing your knowledge with people in your community?
- Do you have enough time to attend training and to complete the volunteer service?



EMGV REQUIREMENTS

New interns are required to complete:

- 50 hours of education**, including the Master Gardener Course (42 hours)
- 50 hours of volunteer service** in Alamance County

Recertifying EMGVs are required to complete:

- 10 hours continuing education**
- 40 hours of volunteer service** in Alamance County,

15-week course begins January 14, 2015

Classes are scheduled for Wednesday mornings from 9 until 12 at the Agricultural Building auditorium

Instructors include Extension Horticulture Agents, Certified Arborists, Master Gardeners, and Extension Specialists.

Topics covered in the 2015 program:

Soils and Fertilizers, Plant ID and Botany, Landscape Design, Lawns, Pruning/Woody Plants, Small Fruit, Tree Fruit, Vegetables, Insects, Annual and Perennial flowers, Plant Diseases, Houseplants, Pesticides and IPM

Program Director: Mark Danieleley, Horticulture Agent

Link to the Application:

<http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Application-2015.pdf>

Deadline for application: November 3, 2014.

2015 fee for book and materials: \$100, payable upon acceptance into the program

For further information, contact:

Alamance County Cooperative Extension

209-C North Graham Hopedale Road

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Or e-mail: Chris Stecker, EMGV Program Coordinator: christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com

