

The best suited and most common types of lawns for this area are bluegrass and tall fescues. Both types may start to look less than desirable after the stress of a hot Missouri summer and require overseeding to repair bare spots or thinning. To keep a healthy lawn looking great, it may need to be overseeded each year.

When To Plant

The optimum time to plant cool season grass seed is in September. You will get the best results with the least amount of effort at this time. The second best choice is March and April although it will require careful maintenance and watering during the late spring and summer months. Once your lawn is established, fall seeding should become a part of your lawn care program.

Avoid Chemicals

Do not use crabgrass preventers prior to seeding or on young grass. Do not use broadleaf weed killers or total vegetation killers one month before seeding or on new grass until it has been mowed three times. Be sure to check the manufactures suggested waiting period for any of these products prior to seeding.

Choosing Your Seed

We recommend bluegrass or tall fescue, but prefer the tall fescue over bluegrass for ease of maintenance. We always suggest purchasing seed that is a blend of two or more different varieties. Blended seeds help protect your lawn from succumbing to disease. We offer Five Star brand blended turf type fescue. The Five Star seed is a quality blend that has proved to be well suited for this area. We have had many years of successful experience with this particular blend.

Equipment Options

There are three different methods of preparing the ground for overseeding: power slices, power rakes and aerators. Basically all three methods are designed to scar or break the soil in order to increase seed soil contact.

Power Slice

The power slice is the least effective simply because the blades are



Slicer Seeder



Power Rake

spaced further apart and it cannot break up as much soil. This results in a sparse or thin stand of grass once it germinates.

Power Rake

Power rakes have blades very similar to a power slice but the advantage is a rake has more blades per inch than the slice which breaks up more soil. In addition to loosening more soil, rakes also remove the thatch barrier. Once the thatch has been brought up to the surface by the power rake, it can be bagged and taken away allowing more seed to come in contact with the soil. More seed soil contact by the use of a power rake results in a thicker fuller stand of grass.



Aerator

Aerators, like power slices have tines spaced further apart so they require many more passes to break up the ground. The advantage to aeration for overseeding however, are numerous. Grass seed planted after aeration germinates deep in the ground creating a more established root system. Aerating improves rooting by loosening compacted soil and breaking down thatch. It allows water and other nutrients to seep deep into the soil, encouraging new root growth and establishing a stronger deeper root base for a lush, healthy lawn.

Note: We recommend the use of power rakes or aerators for overseeding and if you want the best results do both!

Preparing The Soil

Mow the existing grass to 1 inch. The short mowing helps prevent seeds from lodging in the tall grass and never reaching the ground. Work the soil lightly with the use of a power slice or power rake set to cut about 1/8 inch into the ground. Run the equipment across the ground in multiple directions for two or more passes. Both the power slice and the power rake bring quite a bit of thatch to the surface that must be raked up and taken away before seeding. Many people will use a mower with a bagger attachment to suck up the thatch.

Equally as good, and probably more beneficial to the overall health and vigor of your lawn, is preparing the ground for seed with a power aerator. If you plan on using a power slice or power rake with the aerator, as we always recommend power rake or power slice first and bag up the thatch before aerating. The tines on the aerator are spaced further apart than the rake or slice so it's best to make multiple passes at different angles creating a crisscross pattern. It is not necessary to rake up the cores created by the aerator.

Putting Down The Seed

We recommend seeding immediately after preparing the soil with a rotary spreader. For the Five Star turf type fescue blended seed we recommend 3-5 pounds per 1,000 sf. for overseeding established lawns and 8-10 pounds per 1,000 sf. for bare ground. At this time we also recommend using a starter fertilizer.

Watering

To ensure proper germination, you will need to keep the seed moist. This means watering daily on hotter days, sometimes several times daily. The Five Star blend fescue will germinate in 2 weeks.