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## GREEN THUMB GARDENING



By CHRISTINE COLE

## TURF TIME

Now that the snow has disappeared, many homeowners thoughts will turn towards their lawn. Unfortunately, it takes more than cutting your grass once per week to have a beautiful lawn. The following is a lawn care plan that will keep your turf in top-notch shape year 'round.

In spring, lightly rake your lawn to remove the accumulated litter.

If your lawn was thin and patchy last season give it a top-dressing with 1/4" to 1/2" top-soil. Then apply a Turf Starter fertilizer. Gently rake it into soil. Sprinkle a top quality grass seed at one-half the recommended rate for a new lawn. Keep the area moist until the grass seed germinates. When it reaches 3" tall, treat it as an established lawn.

If crabgrass was present in your lawn last year it will be back again this year. Crabgrass is an annual weed that turns "purplish" color late in the season, appears coarser than the rest of the grass blades and lays flat. It germinates at about the same time that the Forsythia bushes bloom. To control its germination apply a crabgrass killer in early spring.

Apply a high nitrogen (the 1st number of 3 listed on product) in early spring (April). Turf has a high demand for nitrogen because it produces the green leafy growth.

May to June put on second application of fertilizer. If weeds are a problem, then choose a fertilizer that also contains a herbicide. This will feed the lawn and kill the weeds when they are actively growing and most susceptible.

Most insect problems occur in lawns during mid-summer. During the July-Aug. application of fertilizer an insect control can also be incorporated or it can be applied separately. However, whenever any insects or diseases are detected through the season an appropriate control should be applied as soon as possible.

Apply low nitrogen Fall Fertilizer in September-October or high nitrogen one in October-November.

Each week Christine Cole of Tuitman's Garden Centre and Landscaping, Highway 25, 1 mile south of Acton, 853-2480, will be presenting helpful tips and information to assist you in creating your garden show-place!

**TUITMAN'S  
GARDEN CENTRE**  
ACTON  
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