

# Prairie Connection

## Other Choices For Green



**W**e love grass, but sometimes forget there is a lot more to grass than mowed turf.

Yes, it's true! Even Minnesota's rigorous weather doesn't mean we cannot grow beautiful landscape grasses. Golfers appreciate the beauty of grasses and

one or several of these plantings can enhance your course with attractive, low maintenance plants.

All grasses benefit from being mowed off in the late winter or early spring. Uncut plants look half dead when new

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# Golf Course Grasses



Mary Meyer, Extension Horticulturist and Professor, University of Minnesota

growth starts in the spring, and cutback plants grow much faster than untrimmed plants. Large areas, such as prairies, should be mowed, hayed or burned every few years for best growth and removal of woody species. Once established, the grasses in this article grow with minimal maintenance, fertilizer, or water. As

someone who grows grass, you know that matching the species to the site is key to success. For more information, look for the new 2012 edition of U of M Extension publication, *Ornamental Grasses for Cold Climates*, online: <https://shop-secure.extension.umn.edu/PublicationDetail.aspx?ID=878>.



**Previous page:** Grasses combine well with other annual and perennial flowers. This mass planting of grasses shows front left, little bluestem; center, the red fall color of Blue Heaven™ little bluestem, and 'Tara' prairie dropseed along the front walk; upper right is more little bluestem. photo credit Mary Meyer

**Above:** Prairie dropseed, *Sporobolus heterolepis*, covers a berm at the entrance to Windsong Farm Golf Club near Watertown, MN. photo credit Mary Meyer

**Below:** Because switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) is native to almost every state in the US, it has a wide range of forms and growth habits. Shown here are 'Thundercloud' 7', left; 'Prairie Sky' 4', center; and 'Cloud 9', 6', right. photo credit Mary Meyer





Create a mass of beauty by using one or two grasses in a large planting. Blue Heaven™ little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium* 'MinnBlueA') shown above in the foreground at the Turf Center at the U of M in St Paul, is an introduction from the U. This native selection is upright, about 40" tall and has striking burgundy and red fall color. Blue-green foliage in the summer gives this grass its common name; it prefers well drained sites and full sun. phot credit Mary Meyer

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