

A LAWN MAINTENANCE CALENDAR FOR MICHIGAN

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A lawn maintenance calendar for Michigan currently is being prepared. The calendar will set up guidelines for establishment, renovation, dethatching, cultivation, irrigation, fertility, and weed control. Information is included on the incidence and prevention of turfgrass diseases, and damage resulting from insects and nematodes.

The calendar has been geared primarily towards individuals with minimum knowledge of the principles of turfgrass culture. However, it also can be used as a quick reference by professional turf managers. Some of the principles which will be included on the calendar are discussed below.

Establishment - Seeding

Optimum: 15 August - 10 September

Alternate: 1 May - 15 May

Explanation: Late summer seedings are preferred because of favorable soil temperatures and moisture levels through the fall and spring, and minimum competition from weeds. Spring seeding ranks second since the period of favorable temperatures and moisture levels is shorter, and weed competition is intense. Summer seedings should not be attempted due to adverse temperature and moisture conditions.

Establishment - Sodding

Optimum: 1 May - 30 May, 15 August - 15 September

Alternate: 1 June - 15 August

Explanation: Sodding in either early spring or late summer can be equally successful. Weed competition is not a factor in spring sodding. Temperature and moisture levels are favorable during both periods. Summer sodding should be attempted only if adequate irrigation is available. Sodding in late fall runs the risk of unfavorable soil temperatures for rooting.

Renovation

Optimum: 15 August - 10 September

Alternate: 1 May - 15 May

Explanation: Same factors as in seeding

Dethatching

Optimum: 20 August - 30 September

Alternate: 15 April - 30 April

Explanation: Since the mechanical removal of thatch damages healthy turf, the process should be carried out during periods of optimum growth. Late summer or early fall removal is succeeded by the longest period of favorable growth conditions. Early spring removal runs the risk of encouraging weed infestation.

Cultivation - Grooving, Spiking, Coring

Optimum: 20 August - 30 September

Alternate: 15 April - 15 May

Explanation: Same factors as in dethatching.

Fertility - Water-Soluble Fertilizers

Optimum: 20 August - 20 September, 10 April 30 May

Explanation: A minimum of two fertilizer applications, spring and fall are recommended. If only one application is made, fall is preferred. Applications should not be made during periods of reduced growth (summer and winter). Fertilizer use during the summer will place additional stress on the turf during periods of high temperature. Summer applications also run the risk of fertilizer burn. Late fall applications should be avoided due to reduced winter hardiness, and increased susceptibility to snowmold.

Fertility - Water - Insoluble Fertilizers

Optimum: 20 August - 20 September, 10 April - 30 May

Alternate: 1 June - 20 August

Explanation: Same principles apply as with water-soluble fertilizers. Under intense culture, a summer application may be required. Water-insoluble fertilizers can be used to reduce the possibility of burn during this period.

Irrigation

The amount of irrigation required is governed by a) water use rate, and b) rainfall. Irrigation rates must be increased during the summer due to increased water use and decreased rainfall.

	Inches required/week
May	0.1
June	0.4
July	1.0
August	0.85
September	0.4
October	0.1

Weed Control - Annual Grasses

Optimum: Preemergence control: 10 April - 10 May

Postemergence control: 15 June - 15 July

Explanation: Preemergence herbicides are effective only when applied before germination. For most annual grasses, this is before May 10 in lower Michigan. Postemergence herbicides offer control only after germination. However, many are not effective after the weeds become well established. These herbicides should be applied after June 15, but no later than July 15.

Weed Control - Broadleaf Weeds

Optimum: 1 September - 15 October

Alternate: 15 April - 15 May

Explanation: Broadleaf weed controls should be applied during periods of cool temperatures. Injury to desirable species may result at high

temperatures. Fall is preferred to spring. Control in the fall is succeeded by a long period of favorable growth conditions, while spring control may encourage the germination of annual weedy grasses due to a thinned turf.

Turfgrass Diseases

	Incidence	Preventative Control
snowmold	1 Oct - 30 April	1 Oct - 30 Nov
leafspot-bluegrass	1 March - 15 June, 1 Aug - 30 Oct	15 March - 30 May
- fescue	1 June - 30 Aug	1 June - 15 July
dollar spot	1 May - 30 Oct	1 May - 30 Oct
brown patch	1 July - 1 Sept	1 July - 30 Aug
Fusarium blight	1 June - 30 Sept	15 June - 30 July
rust	15 July - 30 Nov	control when occurs
stripe smut	1 April - 15 June, 15 Aug - 30 Oct	1 April - 15 May 15 Aug - 30 Oct
powdery mildew	1 July - 30 Nov	1 July - 30 Nov

Insect Damage

white grubs:	1 May - 15 Oct
cutworms:	1 May - 15 July
sod webworms:	1 June - 30 Oct
ants:	1 June - 15 Oct

note: Dates indicate when injury will be visible. Insects may or may not be present.

Nematode Damage

bluegrass and fescue	1 June - 30 Aug
bentgrass:	15 April - 15 June, 15 Sept - 30 Oct