

Growing Turf-Grass Under Shade

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Medium
Centipede grass
Bahia grass

Poor
Bermuda grass

In spite of these limitations, shade tolerant grasses or plants can be established and maintained under shaded conditions. Following practices are likely to improve turf-grass performance under these conditions:

1. Use shade tolerant grass. The shade adaptation of St. Augustine grass is excellent in Florida. In northwest Florida, zoysia grass has shown good shade adaptation.
2. Light intensity can be improved by pruning the tree limbs below 10 ft. or through selective pruning of branches in the crown of the tree. Undesirable trees may be eliminated from the landscape.
3. Remove grass clippings, pine needles and other debris to encourage turf establishment. Fallen tree leaves may smother the grass or provide a home for insect and disease organisms.
4. Air circulation can be enhanced by the elimination of thick underbrush and judicious pruning of overgrown shrubs. This would create drying conditions, lowering relative humidity and retarding disease development.
5. Prune shallow tree roots to reduce competition for water and nutrients.
6. Deep and infrequent irrigation to increase deeper root system.
7. Raise the cutting height to increase the leaf area index.
8. Control application of nitrogen fertilizers to avoid depletion of carbohydrates and to produce tougher tissues.
9. Redirect or control traffic in shaded areas to protect turf from wear injury.
10. Fertilize established trees by drilling or punching holes 12" deep to soil 2 to 3 feet apart from trunk to drip line.
11. Maintain a favorable soil reaction for the grass.
12. Maintain a regular weed control program to reduce plant competition and to improve the appearance of overall landscape.
13. In hard to mow or hard to establish situations, use a suitable ground cover. Monkey grass (*Liriope Muscari*) and Mondo grass (*Ophiopogon Japonicus*) excel as a ground cover in heavy shade and beneath trees (such as live oaks) which have shallow, competitive root systems. Plants such as English Ivy, Algerian Ivy, and Periwinkle are also suitable ground covers. ■

Pesticide Ban Stirs Controversy

By LOUIS RUKEYSER

Are all well-meaning U.S. environmentalists contributing to a coming global food catastrophe?

Many objective observers have come to think so and, if they're right, an early test of Ronald Reagan's resolve to curb governmental overregulation may hit him directly in the breadbasket.

Right now, Americans are being spared any serious effects from this problem. Indeed, it has helped swell the demand for U.S. farm exports, which in turn has contributed to a strengthening dollar.

But as with the energy crisis — which most Americans refused to believe, even when it was staring them right in the gas pump — the food crisis that is taking shape is entirely authentic and is likely, in the end, to hurt us, too. And not just with rising prices.

The millions facing famine, social disruption and political instability today in lands of exploding populations and squandered resources in Africa, Asia and Latin America will need no convincing. A Presidential Commission on World Hunger, appointed by Jimmy Carter but ignored by him, termed the frustrated desire of the poor for food and other basics "the most potentially explosive force" on earth today — and a growing threat to U.S. security.

One experienced journalistic analyst of foreign affairs, Stanley Karnow, concludes bleakly that "it may already be too late for effective measures against this coming catastrophe.

So what does all this have to do with environmentalists? More than you might think. The fragile ability of many nations to feed their people has been set back by the growing list of restrictions placed on the use and sale of certain agriculture chemicals produced mainly in the U.S. Moreover, pending proposals by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would ban still more farm chemicals.

Clearly, it would be a grotesque exaggeration to focus solely on this aspect of the world food crisis, which is exacerbated by factors as diverse as the rising cost of oil, the cutback in agricultural acreage and an addiction to discredited economic policies. But the contribution of environmental extremism increasingly is being recognized, too; as one shrewd Washington observer put it to me, "the more unreasonable restrictions are placed on the use of pesticides and other farm chemicals, the closer we inch to disaster."

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Or listen to another expert, Dr. Jack D. Early, president of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association, who says: "Reality would have us face the fact that without pesticides, preservatives and fertilizers, crop losses would likely double. And if we continue to unreasonably restrict their use, we will have to accept at least some of the responsibility for the problems that will likely result."

As with so many problems that were presented in the 1960s as clear moral choices — but were not — the agricultural chemicals issue is a complex equation requiring judgment and balance.

Only an idiot would disregard all potential damage to the world we will be presenting our grandchildren. But too many Americans have never passed beyond the one-sided (and factually dubious) fervor of Rachel Carson's best-selling "Silent Spring," which warned against interfering with nature. The rush to ban pesticides, old and new, became a religious crusade.

Perhaps the most striking example was the most effective pesticide of all — DDT. One authority, Dr. Robert M. Devlin of the University of Massachusetts, describes it as "the safest and most efficient chemical for its purpose ever produced by man," adding that DDT alone has been responsible for saving more human lives than all the wonder drugs combined. Indeed, as far back as 1972, an EPA hearing examiner acknowledged that DDT was harmless to humans and that, properly used, it posed no threat to animal, bird or marine life. Yet it remains outlawed. ■



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