

Before making an application always read the label instructions to be sure the product is labeled for:

- The site you are treating (athletic field, park, school, etc.)
- The pest you are attempting to control (crabgrass etc.)
- The varieties or types of grass that make up the desirable turf (rye, blue, fescue, cool season, warm season, etc.)

Whenever mixing pesticides always follow label instructions and wear protective clothing and eyewear. Always mix a small sample (jar test) to determine the compatibility of the products prior to mixing a whole batch. Who was it said "there's always room for jello"? I hate when that happens.

Products labeled for the control of summer grassy weeds are pesticides and therefore should only be applied by a licensed pesticide applicator. If you are interested in becoming licensed contact your local Rutgers Cooperative Extension County Office or contact the Pesticide Control Program At (609) 530-5199.

More information may be acquired by reading the publication entitled Crabgrass and Goosegrass Control in Cool Season Turfgrass, written by Dr. Stephen Hart, specialist in weed science at Rutgers. This publication may be accessed at:

www.rce.rutgers.edu/pubs/pdfs/e233.pdf

Or you can request publication #E233 at your local Rutgers Cooperative Extension County Office.

Murphy's Law

Dr. James Murphy is an Associate Extension Specialist in Turfgrass Management for Rutgers, Department of Plant Science. Ask Dr. Murphy your questions: E-mail us at:

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Question: Soccer and lacrosse teams want to utilize the playing fields early in the spring before the grass is actively growing. Is there any way to jump start the turf in the spring?

Answer: There are a couple management techniques that can be used to stimulate early season growth of turf in spring. Late season fertility is one practice that can pay big dividends on fields that receive use in early spring. A good starting point for late season fertility would be two applications of fertilizer, once in September (around Labor Day) and another in October, that applies a total of 2 to 4 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet. If necessary, a third fertilizer application around Thanksgiving can provide even greater stimulation of early season growth.

A turf cover or blanket is another technique that can be used effectively to stimulate early season growth. It is

important to understand how to use turf blankets since the practice can be misused and result in disastrous effects. Regardless of when you put the cover on the turf, a manager needs to monitor turf growth under the cover regularly, particularly during mild weather. Mild winter weather will stimulate considerable shoot growth under a cover; if this occurs, the covers will need to be removed to avoid over stimulating growth and possibly allow mowing. Greater disease incidence can also occur under a turf blanket during relatively warm wet weather. Thus, the cover may need to be moved off the turf occasionally to avoid stimulating disease. Once a cover is removed from the turf the stimulation of growth will begin to wane as the soil temperatures cool and return to "normal". Therefore, moving the cover off and on the turf will be necessary to achieve the greatest effects on early season growth stimulation without encouraging excessive growth or disease. Covers also have the disadvantages of extra labor needed to move the cover on and off the turf as well as storage space when the cover is not in use. Covers may be difficult to hold in place during windy conditions especially on open exposed fields. ;)

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- **Sports Fields: A Manual for Design, Construction & Maintenance** by J. Puhalla, J.f Krans, M. Goatley, 600 pgs.
- **Fundamentals of Turfgrass Management**, N.Christians
- **Destructive Turfgrass Insect Pests**, by Dan Potter
- **Color Atlas of Turfgrass Diseases**, by James Beard
- **The Mathematics of Turfgrass Maintenance, 3rd Ed**, by Mike Agnew & Nick Christians

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