

Athletic Field Maintenance— **TIMING IS CRITICAL**

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AN ATHLETIC MAINTENANCE PROGRAM must include many known agronomic principles, combined with common sense and good judgement. The person placed in charge of the athletic field needs to be trained and have some experience in turf management. A person with a little knowledge of turf care is able to do a good job if he is interested in the field's condition and has the ability to grasp new ideas. He can obtain the necessary information from various organizations such as the State Experiment Stations; Extension Offices; Golf Course Superintendent's Association; Turf Suppliers and private consulting firms. Text books and turf magazines also are of value as guides in athletic field maintenance programs. An understanding of what needs to be done and the principles involved will enhance any program; timing of the procedure is critical.

Below is a list of the maintenance work which should be accomplished each year on bluegrass football fields. If a minimum amount of manpower and money is available, do the work during the periods



marked with an asterisk. Timing of many of the procedures is very important. Putting something off for a week may mean the problems created will be very expensive and time-consuming to correct.

FERTILIZATION—Two to four applications per year is best. Apply four to six pounds actual nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. per year.

*March 15 to April 15
May 15 to June 15

*August 1 to August 15
October 1 to October 30

WATERING—The weather will dictate when to water the fields.

May 1 to October 15

MOWING—The weather, watering schedule, and fertilizer application influence the mowing schedule.

April 1 to November 15

AERIFICATION—Important if severe soil compaction is to be prevented.

April 1 to April 30

*June 15 to July 15

November 15 to December 15

OVERSEEDING—This is a good way to establish new grass on the fields each year. Should be done before every home game.

March 1 to April 15

*August 15 to November 15

KILLING WEEDS—Application of herbicides at two different times gives adequate control of most weeds.

*April 15 to June 15

September 1 to October 15

PREVENTING CRABGRASS—

Chemicals must be applied before crabgrass seed germinates. Exact date depends on locale.

April 1 to April 30

CONTROLLING GRUBS—Apply insecticide only when the grubs, or their damage, is evident.

March 15 to April 15

PREVENTING DISEASES—Observe fields closely during dates listed. Apply fungicides as required. Consider using long lasting systemics.

March 15 to April 15

*May 15 to June 15

*August 1 to September 30

November 15 to December 15

CONTROL FLYING INSECTS—

Only done when insects become a problem during practice sessions and games.

August 15 to November 15

ROLLING—Roll the fields only when the soil is at the best moisture content.

*March 15 to April 15

July 15 to July 30

PLUGGING—A sure way to establish grass in small, bare areas.

*April 1 to May 30

September 15 to November 15

athletic field care

