

TURF FERTILIZATION

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Essential Plant Nutrients Required for Turfgrass Growth and Development

Macronutrients	Typical Percentage in Turfgrass Tissue ^a	Remarks
Nitrogen Phosphorus Potassium	3-6 0.2-0.5 2-3	Commonly used in maintenance fertilization at ratios of 3-1-2 to 5-1-2. Additional P and K (corrective) may be necessary where inherent soil levels are low.
Sulfur	0.2-0.3	Usually only applied where a specific deficiency has been diagnosed. Used in ratios similar to P.
Calcium Magnesium	0.4-0.6 0.2-0.4	Usually only applied where a soil pH adjustment is required or on alkali soils.
Micronutrients	Typical Parts per million (ppm) in Turfgrass Tissue	Remarks
Iron Zinc Molybdenum Manganese Copper Boron Chlorine	40-200 40-120 0.1-0.2 20-150 15-20 5-20 —	Iron is usually used to provide short term green color enhancement. Micronutrients primarily deficient on alkaline soils and/or soils with high phosphorus and/or high micronutrient levels (Mn, Zn, and Cu). Seldom deficient on fine-textured soils.

^a Elemental percentages will vary to some extent depending on turfgrass species and cultivars, environmental conditions and other variables.

A Comparison of Known Late-Season Fertilization Advantages on Cool- Versus Warm-Season Grasses

Late-Season Effect	Cool-Season Grass Response	Warm-Season Grass Response
Winter hardiness	+ -	-
Rooting	+	
Carbohydrate balance	+	
Fall color retention	+	+
Spring greenup	+	+
Spring mowing reduction	+	+
Turf density	+	+
Weed reduction	+	
Disease reduction	+	
Thatch accumulation	+	

Plus (+) denotes a positive response, negative (-) denotes a negative response, (+ -) denotes a limited response and a blank indicates research information limited.

Nitrogen Treatment Effects on a Merion Kentucky Bluegrass Sod

Nitrogen Rate	Annual Clipping Yield (dry wt.)	Nitrogen Content in Clippings	Sod Strength	Rhizomes
lb/A/month	lb/A	%	lb to tear	grams
0	463	3.0	146	99
15	1807	3.3	188	89
30	2555	3.6	130	120
60	5676	4.5	97	43
120	8447	5.4	67	14

Rieke, P. E. 1975. Turfgrass Fertilization - Nitrogen. 16th Illinois Turfgrass Conference Proceedings. 81-85.

Comparative Turfgrass Responses of Commonly Used Maintenance Nutrients-Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium

Turfgrass Response	Nutrient		
	Nitrogen	Phosphorus	Potassium
Shoot Growth	•		
Shoot Density	•		
Grass Color (Green)	•		
Root Growth	•	•	•
Establishment Rate	•	•	
Recuperative Rate	•		
Wear Tolerance	•		
Heat Stress	•		•
Drought Stress	•		•
Cold Stress	•		•
Disease Incidence	•		•

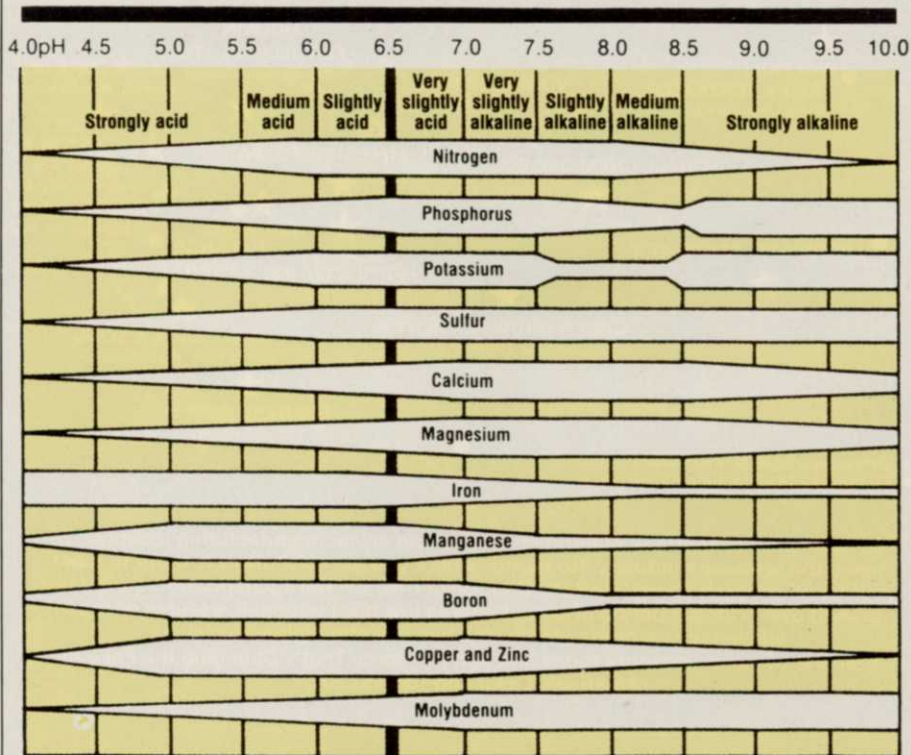
• Fairly strong relationship based on available research.

LANDSCAPE *Guide* MANAGEMENT

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Maximum Nutrient Availability

Maximum availability is indicated by the widest part of the bar



Annual Nitrogen Requirement of Turfgrasses*

Species	Length of Growing Season, Months	Nitrogen per Season lbs./ 1,000 sq. ft.	Variations in Management
Cool-Season:			
sheeps & hard fescue	4- 8	0- 3	low maintenance; roughs
red fescues	4- 8	1- 3	low maintenance to good care
Kentucky bluegrass	5-12	2- 8	lawns, fairways
bentgrasses	4- 8	1- 4	medium care, lawn, fairways
bentgrass, greens	5-12	6-15	clippings removed, forced growth
Warm-Season:			
zoysia	6-10	1- 6	adequate cover
common bermuda	7-12	2- 8	most variable
St. Augustine, bahia	10-12	2- 8	warm areas, lawns
bermudagrass, fairways and tees	5-12	4- 9	good management
bermudagrass, greens	8-12	8-20	may rest over winter

*Adapted from Turf Managers' Handbook by William H. Daniel and Raymond P. Freeborg, published in 1973 by Harvest Publishing Company, New York, N.Y.