

Answers to the seven most asked questions about SUPERSORB.[®]

When we introduced SUPERSORB[®] water absorbants a few years ago we were confident that they would be successful, but we had no idea that this practical and versatile water management tool would generate so much enthusiasm among landscape professionals.

We've compiled some of the most frequently asked questions and answers. If your questions aren't answered here, give us a call toll-free at the number below.



Q: What is SUPERSORB and what does it do?

A: SUPERSORB is a water absorbant. It consists of acrylic copolymer crystals which absorb water to increase the moisture holding capacity of soil. SUPERSORB crystals can absorb up to 200 times their weight in water and release nearly 100 percent of their reserves as the soil dries out or plants require it. SUPERSORB keeps on working for at least two years. It is non-toxic to plants, people and animals, and is eventually metabolized by soil microorganisms.

Q: What will SUPERSORB do for me in landscape installation and maintenance?

A: SUPERSORB C lets you and your customers extend the time between waterings. It helps trees, shrubs, bedding and container plants and ground covers survive moisture stress conditions. SUPERSORB F can be used as a rootdip for bareroot plants, added to hydroseeding mixtures or used to speed the establishment of sod. So SUPERSORB saves you time and water and gives you better plant establishment.

Q: What's the difference between SUPERSORB and other water absorbants on the market?

A: Aside from SUPERSORB's unique blue color, which is helpful when mixing it into the soil, you'll find that SUPERSORB's particle size is more uniform for more predictable performance. In addition, SUPERSORB is backed by AQUATROLS' customer service and 35 years of experience.

Q: Which particle size, Coarse or Fine should I use?

A: We recommend SUPERSORB C, Coarse Particle (1-2mm) for transplanting trees and shrubs, amending the soil in beds, containers and hanging baskets. SUPERSORB F, Fine Particle (<.5mm) is used for hydroseeding, installing sod, seeding and for root dipping bareroot stock.

Q: Will SUPERSORB waterlog the soil or take water away from plant roots?

A: No to both questions. SUPERSORB expands into discrete chunks; it doesn't form a soggy mass. As SUPERSORB expands and contracts it actually helps keep the soil or container mixes open and loose. Since water must be in a free state for SUPERSORB to absorb it, water clinging to soil particles or within plant root tissues cannot be absorbed by the crystals.

Q: How much does SUPERSORB cost to use?

A: It costs about \$.50 to amend the backfill for a tree or shrub with a one foot in diameter rootball.

Q: Where can I buy SUPERSORB?

A: From the turf and hort supply distributors throughout North America. If your distributor doesn't stock SUPERSORB, accept no substitutes. Call us toll free and we'll give you the name of the nearest SUPERSORB distributor.

Call us for further information, technical service or a free sample. 1-800-257-7797, in N.J. (609) 665-1130.

AQUATROLS

The Water Management People

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REDUCE LOSS IN TRANSPLANTING TREES

No matter how careful you are when you plant trees, stress from drought, heat, poor soil, etc., threaten the life of the transplant. Planted trees need fast root regrowth. Just drench the soil after planting with ROOTS diluted 50 to one. Two ounces ROOTS (concentrate) to one inch caliper, so a gallon will treat sixty seedlings or ten to twenty large trees.

WARRANTED PLANTINGS

If you have an obligation to replace any plants in a contract period, doesn't it make sense to encourage root growth? There is really nothing else besides ROOTS that will do the whole job. ROOTS has to be the best insurance policy obtainable on plantings.

KEEP EVERYTHING LOOKING GOOD WITH ironROOTS*

If you are not getting the growth, healthy appearance, or flowering that you want in your turf and plantings, you need ironROOTS*, root growth enhancer plus 3% chelated iron citrate. Spray ironROOTS once in the spring, once in the fall. Use like regular ROOTS.

ROOTS was developed by scientists at the Yale School of Forestry and is widely used for seeding, overseeding, reseeding, hydroseeding, installation and transplanting.

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roots inc.

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PROBLEM MANAGEMENT

by Balakrishna Rao, Ph.D.

Preventing winter rabbit damage

Problem: We get a number of calls from our customers to protect ornamental plants from rabbit feeding injury during winter. What do you recommend for managing rabbits in the landscape? (Ohio)

Solution: Rabbits can cause extensive damage to ornamental and fruit trees when their source of food becomes scarce in the winter months. Generally, they prefer tender new growth to feed, but during winter months they feed on bark and may girdle the plants. The loss of bark, depending on the extent of the injury, can result in the death of the tree, or may result in poor vitality and increased susceptibility to diseases.

Repellents are possibly the best means of preventing rabbit damage. Repellents applied to plants on a warm day in the fall will protect the trees all winter. In many situations, one application is sufficient, though two applications provides additional protection.

Repellents should be applied to the trunk and/or low-growing branches within the reach of rabbits when snow accumulates. A number of commercial formulations are available in the market. Some can be sprayed while others need to be painted on with a brush.

Other methods recommended in the literature are shooting, trapping, protective covers around trees and installing fences around areas to be protected from rabbits. These methods would be preferred in areas where chemical control is not practical.

Getting control of barnyardgrass

Problem: I run a small business that has a big problem with water grass. It seems to be taking over more and more of our properties. The controls I've been using seem to slowly dispose of the other weeds but not the water grass. Please help! (Missouri)

Solution: The water grass you are referring to is probably barnyardgrass (*Echinochloa crusgalli*), which is also known as Panic-grass, Cockspur-grass, and Cocks-foot.

Barnyardgrass is a common annual weed with a coarse growing habit. Plants are erect or reclining with clumps two to four feet wide and blades 1/2 inch or more wide and one foot or more in length. They produce heavy, coarse panicles, usually purplish in color.

Barnyardgrass is a monocot that requires a pre-emergence material for control. Try Betasan, Dacthal, or Pre-M. These products will help you manage the water grass plants as they emerge from the seed. Like crabgrass management, early spring treatment is recommended to manage water grass.

Remember that a few weeds may germinate after the residual effect of the first pre-emergence herbicide treatment is gone. If the problem is severe, consider treating with post-emergence annual grass

management products like Acclaim, Daconate 6, Prograss, DSMA, or MSMA when the plants are very young.

In some situations, you may not be able to kill the plant. However, the treatment may stress the plant and inhibit seed production for future infestation.

Homemade mealy bug remedies

Problem: Can a home plant grower mix up his own concoction for mealybugs and spider mites? What chemicals or household products are involved in such a spray remedy? (Wisconsin)

Solution: I am not familiar with any articles published in professional journals about "home concoctions" and their effect on mealy bugs or spider mites. However, some people may be trying different household products and may have found variable results.

You may find some information concerning homemade concoctions in consumer publications by Jerry Baker, who talks about that type of pest management approach. His books are available in the garden departments of retail stores.

For mealybugs, I would recommend that you use horticultural oil as a dormant treatment in the spring. Later on use chemicals such as malathion, Orthene, Sevin, or insecticidal soap when overwintering nymphs become active in mid-May, June 1 and/or in late July as needed. **LM**



Balakrishna Rao is Director of Lawn Care Technical Resources for The Davey Tree Co., Kent, Ohio.

Questions should be mailed to Problem Management, Landscape Management, 7500 Old Oak Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44130. Please allow 2-3 months for an answer to appear in the magazine.

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