

March 2013

Is the Grass REALLY GREENER on the Other Side?

Many homeowners on the island strive to have a golf-course green lawn, but the unique weather and soil conditions on the island make that a little challenging for many.

With spring knocking on our door, now is the perfect time to give your lawn some TLC.

Now is the time to lime your grass. It is good for overall soil quality to balance the pH for better growing. And, lime is especially helpful as a natural product for addressing mossy patches (after you scratch up the area with a rake or even rent a power rake for densely covered patches.)

Once you've limed your grass, consider applying a combination fertilizer and moss control to address the grass' demand for nutrients this time of year, after a season of rain that depletes the soil.

A recommendation is to apply one-pound of nitrogen in a blend per 1000-square feet. If you're using a 20-5-10 formula or similar, then it would require five pounds of actual fertilizer to make up the one pound of nitrogen required.

You can apply four to five applications through the growing season, approximately every six to eight weeks.

An added consideration in the choice of fertilizer is weed control, especially in light of the ban

on cosmetic pesticides in the Valley. Fertilizers with a corn gluten meal can be used early in the growing season as a preventive (must be applied before the weed seeds germinate).

The third recommendation for a healthy lawn is to add seed to areas that may need some extra cover. Be sure, however, to purchase a name-brand seed that's formulated for our wet, West Coast conditions.

You will also want to be generous with your seeding, and dress it with a topcoat of topsoil in any bare areas.

A turf-type perennial rye grass and fescue mix is a shorter-growing variety, which is ideal for areas near your landscaping beds.

If you use the wrong seed, such as pasture grass, you will spend your summer cutting the grass instead of enjoying it; and if your seed is not specifically for this area, you will be disappointed with the results.

Another often-overlooked point with lawn care is the mower. Be



sure your blades are sharpened. Many hardware stores offer a sharpening service, which is a modest investment to get that lawn the talk of the neighbours.

Steve Nixon is owner of Black Creek Farm & Feed Supply, which has been serving the Valley for 30 years.
www.BlackCreekFarmAndFeed.com
250-337-8922.