



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
Service

Columbia,
Missouri



Urban Conservation Tips



Seeding and Mulching

Description

Seeding and mulching techniques are used to establish grass wherever soil is exposed around buildings, new construction areas, subdivision developments and any other area that has been cleared of its protective vegetation.

Seeding and mulching stabilizes the soil and reduces the damages and inconveniences caused from sediment movement. This sheet provides information to help establish vegetation on highly erodible sites, such as steep hills. For information about seeding entire lawns, refer to the Urban Conservation Tips sheet entitled "Establishing Lawns."

Techniques

Before seeding an exposed area, all other necessary water-control measures - such as diversions and drains - should be installed. This will prevent damage caused by surface water until the grass or other vegetation is established.

When the runoff-control measures have been completed, the area should be smoothed to eliminate all rills, gullies and depressions. Remember that slopes with a grade of more than 3:1 are difficult to maintain and to keep vegetated.

If topsoil has been removed from the area, it may be necessary to have more hauled to the site. The area should have at least six inches of topsoil, which should be free of stones, roots and other debris that hinder seedbed preparation and maintenance after the grass is established. However, it is important that you do not adversely alter the drainage pattern of your lot when you add topsoil.

If topsoil needs to be added, first break up the subsoil to alleviate compaction. All mechanical operations should be performed across the slope to reduce erosion caused by water running down paths created by the machinery. Apply lime and

fertilizer in accordance with soil test results. Work lime six inches into the soil. Mix fertilizer three inches deep. In the absence of a soil test, follow the recommendations of the chart below.

After working lime and fertilizer into the topsoil, the seedbed should be rolled. Then, spread seed evenly over the area. Seeding rates will vary depending upon which type of vegetation you are establishing (see chart on back). Roll or rake the ground after spreading seed to help ensure that the seed will make good contact with the soil.

Mulch all newly seeded areas immediately after spreading the seed. Cover the seed with wheat or oat straw to protect the seed and new seedlings from erosion until plants are well established. On steep hills, anchor the mulch to the soil with netting, or use a commercially available fiber mat containing mulch.

Maintenance

Inspect all seeded areas after heavy rains. Fill rills with topsoil, and seed and mulch damaged areas as soon as possible. If 60 percent or more of an area is damaged, the entire area should be re-established by using the same fertilizer and seeding recommendations as before.

Weeds should be controlled during establishment of grass by mowing them or by using approved herbicides. When using herbicides, adhere strictly to the instructions and precautions on (over)

Lime and Fertilizer Recommendations

Soil Treatment	Rate per 1,000 Square Feet
<u>Limestone</u>	
Ground (agricultural grade)	50 lbs.
Hydrated	35 lbs.
<u>Fertilizer</u>	
10-10-10	15-20 lbs.
12-12-12	12-17 lbs.
Straw	100 lbs.

the label.

Fertilize the area as needed during the growing season to maintain a vigorous stand of grass.

Where To Get Help

For more information about seeding and mulching, contact your local Soil Conservation Service office, or the local University of Missouri Extension Service office. The Soil Conservation Service office is listed in the telephone directory under "U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture."

Grass Seeding Rates	
Grass Variety	Seeding Rate
<i>Bluegrass</i>	<i>2-3 lbs./ 1,000 square feet</i>
<i>Ryegrass</i>	<i>5 lbs./ 1,000 square feet</i>
<i>Red Fescue</i>	<i>4 lbs./ 1,000 square feet</i>
<i>Tall Fescue</i>	<i>7-8 lbs./ 1,000 square feet</i>
Mixture <i>Bluegrass</i> <i>Ryegrass</i> <i>Red Fescue</i>	<i>3-4 lbs./ 1,000 square feet</i>