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Subject: Fall Armyworm Alert & August Lawn Tips

August Lawn Tips & Fall Armyworm Alert

Sharing a few warm-season lawn pictures that were sent to us recently. Clockwise from top left: Zenith Zoysia from Real Turf Solutions; Zenith Zoysia by Restoration Landscape Company; Leisure Time Zoysia by Lawn Works; Leisure Time Zoysia installed by a DIY homeowner.

Color varies due to differences in cameras and lighting, but you can see they are all verdant green from one end to the other.

August is still a great time to lay new warm-season sod.

August Warm-Season Lawn Tips

- Watering Established lawns: Provide at least 1" of water a week.
- Watering New sod: Check your new sod for moisture multiple times a day. To keep new sod saturated, you may need to water several times daily until the new sod is tacked down with new roots. More tips on our [Watering New Sod blog post](#).
- A common summer disease is [Dollar Spot](#) on warm season lawns. It's a tricky one! A deficiency of nitrogen, amongst other factors, exacerbates dollar spot. Do yourself a favor and follow that link to learn more.
- Aerating & Compost Topdressing for Fertilization: There's still time to aerate and provide nutrition with our OMRI Listed Soil3 Compost. August is the last month for compost topdressing. We rent compost spreaders.
- August is the last month for safely [applying fertilizer](#) before autumn.

August Tall Fescue Lawn Tips - It's almost Tall Fescue Time for those of you in The Upstate

- We do not recommend laying Tall Fescue sod until temperatures cool down again in the autumn . . . that will be next month (September).
- Watering Established Tall Fescue: Provide at least 1" of water a week, maybe up to 2".
- Watering New Tall Fescue Sod: We advise against laying Tall Fescue in the summer months. Wait until September to lay Tall Fescue sod.
- Apply preventative fungicide to Tall Fescue to control Brown Patch disease, a disease that is everywhere in our soils.
- Fertilization: Because of the ubiquitous nature of Brown Patch, we recommend holding off fertilizing Tall Fescue in June, July, and August. Fertilization increases the likelihood of a Brown Patch infestation.
- Aerating & Compost Top Dressing: Do not aerate or compost top dress Tall Fescue lawns until September.

Fall Armyworm Alert

Armyworm moths lay their egg sacs on homes, fencing, bushes, etc., but rarely do they lay eggs in grass.

NCSU Turf says that "Now is the time to start monitoring for egg masses on plants, objects and buildings adjacent to a turfgrass stand. As soon as the eggs hatch, caterpillars will immediately start feeding on nearby turf so early detection is essential to anticipating and preventing severe armyworm damage. Once they are detected, there are a number of products that are effective at reducing armyworm populations." Read more about [Fall Armyworms on the NCSU TurfFiles website](#).

How to Protect Your Lawn

- Fall Armyworms (FAW) especially love freshly cut, newly laid sod, but they will consume anything to their liking. *Please scout ALL sod daily.*
- There is no "over the counter" preventative treatment available to homeowners for armyworms in the egg or moth stages. However, insecticide is available to homeowners for treating when they're in the caterpillar stage (they do all their damage in the caterpillar stage).
- When you see a sign of caterpillars, treat your lawn immediately because they can do terrible damage within 24 hours.

How do I know if I have armyworms?

- If your sod has become discolored or looks like it has been exposed to frost. The damage often begins on the edge of the lawn and moves across.
- A large number of birds in a turf area may be a sign of armyworms since they are an excellent food source for birds.
- Test for armyworms with a soap flush:

Soap Flush Test for Pests

A soap flush is a mixture of 3 tablespoons of liquid dish soap with 1 gallon of water. We find that lemon-scented dish soap is the most effective. Pour the mixture into a 3' x 3' area and watch the action. The soap will agitate the caterpillars' skin and they will come to the surface - you can see them and then you will know to treat for them immediately.

We recommend scouting for armyworms from July until the first good frost.

This test also works for many other destructive insects.

[Click for Fall Armyworm Pictures & More Info on Our Blog](#)

Treating for Fall Armyworms

- There are an abundance of insecticides available on the market that treat armyworm infestations.
- Treat more than once - Just because the armyworms have gone to pupae stage does not mean they are gone. They will mature, lay eggs, hatch, and infest your yard again. Be vigilant and treat multiple times according to the insecticide instructions in order to break the armyworm life cycle.
- Timing of treatments is important - Early morning or late afternoon is the best time because the armyworms are active. If applied mid-day and the armyworms may be below the surface of the new turf and the application will not be as effective.
- If you live in an area prone to infestation, stock up on insecticide and be prepared to defend your yard with treatment when necessary.
- Make sure to read all insecticide instructions carefully and apply at the application rate recommended on the product

- label for the pest you are targeting.

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