

## Lawns need proper spring feeding

LANCASTER — Spring feeding is essential for a vigorous lawn; late March or early April is the best time to take care of this task. If you do not have a fertilizer recommendation based on soil testing, follow this general prescription.

Apply a fertilizer that has a N-P-K analysis ratio of 2:1:1. (10-6-4 fertilizer for example). Apply the fertilizer at a rate that will provide 1 pound of nitrogen (N) per 1000 square feet of lawn. If you used a 10-6-4 fertilizer, you would apply 10 pounds of fertilizer per 1000 square feet.

The nitrogen in a commercial fertilizer may be in inorganic, organic or partially organic forms.

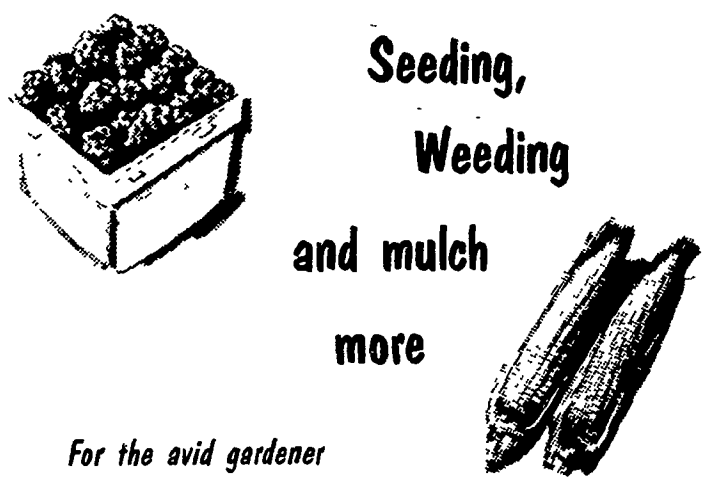
Inorganic nitrogen is fast acting but must be used properly to avoid burning the lawn. Organic nitrogen is more expensive and slower acting but effective over a longer period of time and safer to use. Lawn fertilizers often combine the two forms of nitrogen, a fertilizer containing 50 percent organic nitrogen is a good choice for early spring lawn feeding.

A properly working and accurately calibrated spreader is important in obtaining correct and uniform application of the fertilizer. Careful spreading is necessary to avoid the "striped lawn" effect.

Pre-emergence crabgrass controls should also be applied soon if necessary. Henry Indyk,

Extension specialist in turf management at Cook College, says that these products must go on the lawn by the latter part of April to be effective. Using forsythia bloom as an application guide is not accurate. In using these herbicides, correct rate of application is essential to obtaining good control of crabgrass. Since crabgrass does not proliferate in shady areas, save the herbicide for sunny areas. Keep in mind that Siduron is the only herbicide to be used if you need to do any seeding now or if your lawn is less than one year old.

For more complete and detailed information on your lawn care and pre-emergence herbicides, contact your Extension Service.



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### Seed Test

Before you stock up on flower and vegetable seeds, have you checked last year's leftovers? Many seeds germinate well the second year, especially if they have been properly stored.

The seed test is simple to do. From each packet you're testing, wrap several seeds in a moist paper towel and place them in a plastic bag — a separate bag for each variety. If most seeds in the bag germinate within two to three weeks, then last year's seeds are still good and ready to be used. Throw away the test seeds and plant those varieties that germinated well. Discard those that do not.

If you are buying new seed, plan now to use the leftovers next year. As soon as you've finished planting the seeds you need, store the leftovers in a closed container in a dry, cool or even cold location. A basement, unheated store room, or even the refrigerator are good location to try.

Not all gardens are large enough to accommodate all the seeds in all the packets you are using so get in the habit of saving the leftovers for next year instead of casting them to the four winds.

### Flowering A Jade Plant

Jade, *Crassula argentea*, an extremely common and easy-to-grow house plant, seldom receives any notoriety for its showy flower - in fact, very few people realize that

this plant blooms at all.

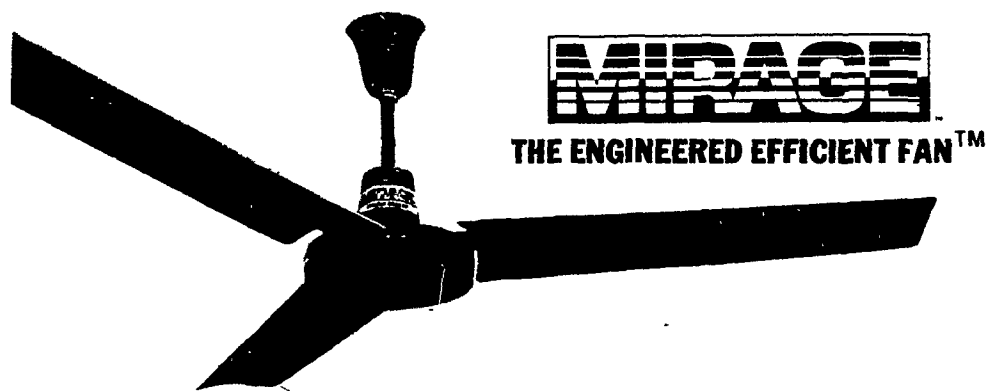
Growing Jade as a foliage plant is one thing, but in order to bring it into flower, additional requirements of light, temperature, maturity, and adequacy of root development must be met. Since Jade is a desert plant, the initiation of flower buds will only take place if we duplicate this natural environment by providing warm dry temperatures will cool, 50° nights.

High light intensity is also critical both for bloom and vegetative growth, contrary to the beliefs of some people that Jade can tolerate a low-light interior. A bright, sunny window facing south, east or west is essential. The maturity of the plant is another important factor. Young juvenile plants up to 3 - 4 years of age are not sufficiently matured to produce flower buds.

Keeping the plant pot bound, even to the point where it might look very much out of balance to the size of the container, will also favor bud formation. Although these requirements are essential if you wish to bring your Jade into flower, the plant on an overall basis will perform far better and provide greater decoration if grown in this manner than one grown under minimum standards. As with all succulents, keep watering and fertilization to a minimum and refrain from using chemical pesticides.

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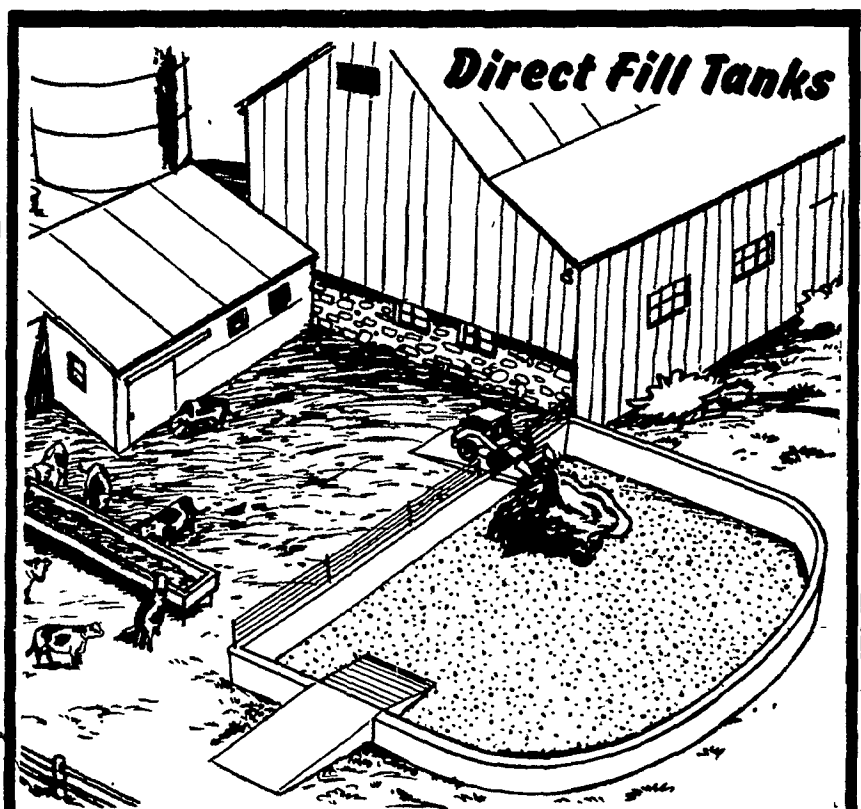
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