

Choose Right Lawn Care Products

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.)— Before you resign yourself to having another mediocre lawn this year – or to spending a hefty part of your salary to improve it – take a few tips from a turfgrass specialist in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"Revitalizing your lawn doesn't need to be a costly, time-consuming process," says Peter Landschoot, associate professor of turfgrass science. "It's more a question of correctly evaluating the trouble spots before you invest in solutions."

•Soil Test. The Penn State soil fertility test, which tells consumers how much fertilizer and lime are required, is available for a nominal fee at Penn State Cooperative Extension offices across the state. The test helps determine what nutrients the lawn needs and when to apply them.

•Weeds. The least costly way to control weeds is to follow good lawn management practices designed to prevent reinfestation. A sound program of mowing, watering and fertilizing is your best defense against weed invasion, Landschoot says.

"Before purchasing herbicides, first identify the weeds you want to control," he says. "If you're unsure what the weed is, or how to control it, don't just guess what product would be best. Bring a sample of the weed to a lawn and garden center or to your county Cooperative Extension office and get a professional recommendation."

•Weed Control. "Most weed problems can be reduced by using a weed-and-feed product – herbicide and fertilizer rolled into one," Landschoot says. He recommends buying or renting a spreader to ensure that the product is distributed evenly across the lawn. Homeowners should be sure to identify what types of weeds are in the lawn before choosing a product. Not all weed-and-feed products are

the same.

•Read Labels. When it comes to fertilizers and herbicides, more isn't necessarily better, says Landschoot. "Follow the instructions on the label. Not only are you wasting money if you apply more than the recommended amount, you could damage the grass."

•Timing. "To combat crabgrass, you have to apply herbicide before the weed germinates," Landschoot says. "Some people use forsythia bloom as an indicator, but a good rule of thumb is to apply a pre-emer-

gence herbicide before April 15 in southeastern Pennsylvania, during late April in central Pennsylvania, and between May 1 and May 15 in the northwest corner of the state.

"For broadleaf weeds, such as dandelion and clover, wait until the weeds appear before treating them," Landschoot says.

Before purchasing grass seed to replenish thin areas, homeowners should assess why the grass disappeared in the first place. "Ask yourself if the lawn was too wet, too shady or poor in fertility before you spend time

and money trying to replace the grass," he says.

"The best time to reseed is in late summer or fall, when there isn't much competition from weeds. If you apply herbicides in spring, you can damage young seedlings."

"When it's time to reseed, you don't just throw seed on the lawn," he says. "First, get rid of weeds, break up the soil surface

and put down the seed so it makes good contact with the soil. Place straw mulch over the area so the soil doesn't dry out."

Choose a high quality seed or seed mixture adapted to the site conditions, says Landschoot. For more information about specific varieties suited to your area, contact the Penn State Cooperative Extension office in your county.



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ANSWER — John Anshant, Aston, requested a recipe for really good Hungarian goulash and really good dumplings.

Goulash

- 1 pound box macaroni
- 1 pound ground beef or turkey
- 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 8-ounce bag shredded cheddar cheese
- 8-ounce bag shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Cook macaroni as directed on box. Brown ground meat in separate pan and drain. Mix macaroni, meat, and tomatoes well. Add sugar. Over very low heat, add cheese, stir continuously until all cheese is melted.

ANSWER — Janet Spangler, York Springs, sends a recipe requested by Beverly Bishop of Landisburg.

Cocoanut Bon-Bons

- 2½ cups macaroon cocoanut
 - ¼ cup Karo (red label)
 - 1 pound melting chocolate wafers
- Mix well and cool. Shape into eggs and dip in one pound melted milk chocolate wafers. Macaroon cocoanut and milk chocolate disks can be purchased in the bulk food section of supermarkets.

ANSWER — Thanks to Eileen Greenaway, Somerville, N.J., who sends spinach recipes requested by Bonita Martin.

Spinach Souffle

- 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach
- 1 teaspoon lemon seasoned salt
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1½ cups milk
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 egg yolks, beaten until light
- 1 cup sharp shredded cheese
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon horseradish
- 2 egg whites, stiffly beaten

Cook spinach 10-12 minutes and drain, pressing out excess liquid. Melt butter and add flour, milk, salt, and pepper. Add egg yolks, cheese and remaining seasonings. Add spinach. Allow mixture to cool completely then fold in egg whites. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes in a greased 1½ quart casserole. Serves 4-6. May be frozen.

Creamed Spinach

- 2 10-ounce packages frozen spinach
- 1 tablespoon minced onion
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 8-ounces cream cheese, cut into pieces
- 1 tablespoon milk
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- Parsley for garnish

Cook spinach, onion, and salt 10-12 minutes (covered) in boiling water. Drain, pressing out excess liquid. Return spinach to saucepan and add cheese, milk, and pepper. Cook over low heat until cheese melts and mixture is well blended, stirring constantly. Garnish with parsley. Serves 6.

Thanks to Anna Martin, Denver, for sending this spinach recipe for Bonita.

Popeye's Favorite Snack

- 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach
- 1 cup herb seasoned stuffing mix, crushed to crumbs or bread crumbs toasted and seasoned.
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350 degrees, cook spinach according to package directions and drain well. Combine spinach with remaining ingredients, mixing well. Roll into walnut-sized balls. Bake at 350 degrees on ungreased cookie sheet for 10 minutes. Then can be frozen before cooking. Without thawing, bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve hot or cold. Fun in lunches.

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