

**All Gardens
Great & Small**
by
York Co.
Horticultural Agent
Tom Becker



June: Start Watering
This is the fourth article in a series on soil and water conservation. Your careful use of lawn irrigation will help local streams and will ultimately benefit larger bodies of water in your surrounding area by reducing fertilizer and pesticide run-off and by conserving water

Adequate soil moisture is essential for a good green lawn all summer. A healthy plant is composed of 75-90 percent water

There are several options for applying water to plants. These include a watering can or a garden hose with a fan nozzle, lawn sprinklers, a perforated plastic soaker hose, a drip, trickle system, or a semi-automatic drip system designed for your lawn.

When irrigating, adjust the flow or rate of water application to one-half inch per hour. This will avoid causing surface run-off

To determine the rate for a sprinkler system, place small tin cans at various places within the sprinkler's reach, and check the level of water in the cans at 15 minute intervals.

When using the oscillating type of lawn sprinkler in a garden, place the sprinkler on a platform higher than the crop to prevent water from being diverted by plant leaves

Try to keep the watering pattern even by frequently moving the sprinkler and overlapping about one half of each pattern.

Avoid watering your lawn in the evening. Wet foliage overnight may encourage disease. Morning watering is preferred.

When using perforated plastic hoses or soaker hoses in the garden, place the holes down (if there are holes), along one side of the crop row you want to water or underneath the mulch. Water will slowly soak into the soil around shrubs and trees.

Frequent, light watering encourages shallow rooting. Grass plants suffer more quickly during summer droughts. On the other hand, too much water, especially in poorly drained soils

can also damage plant growth.

When should you start watering your lawn? Your lawn can use an inch or more of water per week in hot, dry weather. Begin watering your lawn when the soil begins to dry out, but before the grass actually wilts.

Can your lawn go into summer dormancy? Yes, it occurs when loss of water occurs in the grass blade. As a result, footprints will make a long-lasting imprint instead of bouncing right back.

The alternative most often used with water shortages is not

to water the lawn at all. Dormancy is the grass plant's built in protection plan. The lawn will turn brown as moisture reserves dry up, but it is far from dead. By going into a dormant state deeper than its winter dormancy, the grass plant halts the process of photosynthesis. Production of new growth is arrested. This also explains why grass grows at a slower pace in hot, dry periods. When rains do come and drought stress ends, the grass will green up. This is especially true for fescues, bluegrass, zoysia, and Bermuda grass lawns.

Restrict the use of herbicides during hot summer weather. Herbicides stress the lawn in a drought. And when a lawn becomes brown during a dry spell avoid using fertilizer. Application of fertilizer at this time can kill your lawn.

Any questions regarding the above article can be addressed to Tom Becker, Penn State cooperative Extension at (717) 840-7408.



Where's your mustache?™



Berks Society 4

The Society of Farm Women Berks Co. Group #4 met on April 14 at the home of Barbara Shaner, New Berlinville.

The group made cookie trays for shut-ins in the area.

During the business meeting conducted by Ferne Kulp the group decided to raise the amount given annual for Family & Consumer Science scholarship to Boyertown's outstanding senior and 9th graders at East &

West Junior High.

The Ways & Means committee distributed Stanley books. Members will take orders until the next meeting. The date for our yard/bake sale is June 20.

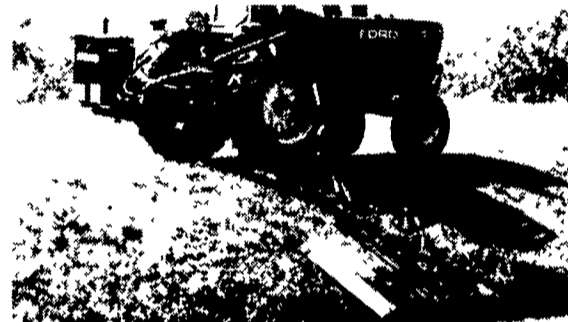
The next meeting will begin at the home of Cherry's Flowers, Boyertown, for the program and then proceed to Georgeanna Fullerton's home, Boyertown, for the business meeting.

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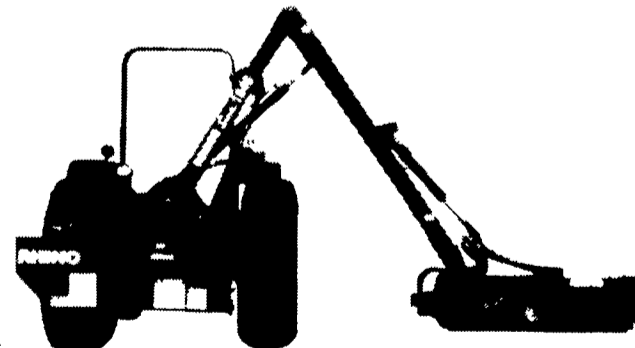
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