McGough's Turf Grass Formulas

- **Sunny Mix**

An equal blend of bluegrass, fescue, and perennial rye. Our most popular mix, it offers practical and aesthetic value.

- **Shady Mix**

The best mix to withstand partial to moderate shade (3-4 hours of sunlight is considered minimal for long-term survival). Grasses prefer to be growing in a sunny spot—if you are seeding a very shady lawn, ask about your options.

- **Premium Sunny**

An improved Sunny Mix with additional bluegrasses to promote deeper color, vigorous growth and thicker populations.

- **Supreme Sports**

Eighty percent bluegrasses, this mix is chosen for deep color and aggressive growth.

- **Sunny Dry**

Popular for our sandy local soils. Primarily perennial ryes, it germinates and establishes quickly and will tolerate dry, hotter conditions.

- **Sun & Shade**

Similar to Sunny Mix with additional fescue, it is an adaptable mix often used in parks or traveling shade conditions.

- **Old English**

Our popular blend for low-maintenance "cottage" lawns. Tolerant to traffic and less-than-ideal growing conditions, including some shade.

- **Reduced Mowing**

Several fine-leaf fescues are blended for their low-growing tendencies, resulting in lower maintenance.

- **Premium 5-Way Sod Blend**

The very best, to rival the finest sods. Intense color, strong, aggressive growth. A "showcase" lawn, but be prepared for higher maintenance needs.

- **M-DOT Roadside**

Fast-germinating. Generally used for erosion control or very low-maintenance areas where cover is key.

Turf Seed Varieties

Annual Rye · Perennial Rye · 4-Way Perennial Rye · 3-Way Tall Fescue · Sheep's Fescue · Creeping Red Fescue · Kentucky Blue · White Dutch Clover · Poa Supina

Test your soil

Knowing a few basic things about your soil can save you a lot of frustration down the road. Having your soil analyzed before you seed allows you to add amendments without disturbing delicate seedlings or established areas. If your turf site has pH issues, nutrient deficiencies, or would benefit from added organic matter or topsoil, this is the ideal time to begin addressing any problems.

We'll take care of your turf grass needs. Ask us about:

♦ ***Turf Seed*** ♦ ***Fertilizer***
♦ ***Crabgrass Prevention***
♦ ***Weed & Insect Control***
♦ ***Organics***
♦ ***Soil Testing***
♦ ***Erosion Control***

Products are available in small and large quantities to suit your requirements.

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MCGOUGH'S, INC.

A Traverse City Centennial Store

Planting a New Lawn

Guidelines for Successfully Starting a Lawn from Seed

www.mcgoughsinc.com

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Spring vs. Fall Seeding

Although many marketing campaigns would lead you to believe that spring is the best time to get turf grasses started, we find that late summer or early autumn is the ideal time in our region. Spring, once the ground is warm enough to germinate seed, can certainly be successful, but will likely require more maintenance for you to keep young plants healthy through the stress of summer heat. Ground warmth, moderate air temperatures, more frequent rainfall (usually!), and less weed competition are definite advantages of seeding in the early fall.

**If seeding in spring—do not use crabgrass preventer as it will also prevent your turf seeds from germinating*

Clarify your goals

First, what kind of a lawn do you want? An emerald -green carpet? Tough and resilient for heavy traffic areas? Drought-resistant? Fast-growing? Secondly, what conditions are present? Do you have irrigation, or can you commit to hoses and sprinklers? How much sunlight does the lawn receive in a day? Will this change through the season if you have deciduous trees in your landscape? How often do you want to fertilize? Are your goals reasonable for the growing conditions?

After asking yourself these types of questions, and examining the results of your soil test, you can determine what type of seed will work best for your new lawn.

Prepare your site

A little preparation before you plant will save you a lot of work throughout the season. Remove any undesirable plants—whether you chemically kill the weeds or physically dig them out—your tender young grass seedlings will not outcompete hardy established weeds. Loosen the top 1-2 inches of soil—a landscape rake works very well for this job. Don't be tempted to rototill or work the soil too deeply—you will bring dormant weed seeds to the surface. Rocks, sticks, compacted clumps of soil and other debris should be removed as you level out the area. Work any needed amendments into the soil prior to planting—sulfur or lime, fertilizer or topsoil can all be added at this time before you smooth out your seedbed.

Planting & Establishment

We recommend using a broadcast spreader to ensure an accurate, even coverage. Hand or lawn spreaders will

work fine. The rate of turf seed for new lawn varies between 5 -7 lbs per 1000 square feet. To give you an idea, if you pace out a 10 x 20 foot strip, 1 - 1.5 lbs should cover it. You want to make certain you have enough space that the seedlings aren't competing for adequate nutrient and water. After seeding, you should lightly rake the seed to a depth of 1/4 inch. A light layer of topsoil or compost can be sprinkled and smoothed over the seedbed, also. You should avoid sowing seed directly on the soil surface—exposure to heat, wind, even birds—can reduce your success. Good seed-to-soil contact is crucial! A thin layer of mulch to help hold moisture can make a tremendous difference, especially for slopes, areas exposed to wind or intense sunlight, or places where irrigation is difficult. Straw or straw with tack, erosion blankets, and PennMulch are all good types of mulch to use.

Keep your seed bed evenly damp—not saturated with puddling water. And be prepared for high water needs for weeks, if not months, if Mother Nature doesn't send adequate moisture when you need it. Once the grass is up, be cautious about watering too late in the day—continuously wet blades at night can promote disease. Your new turf is

pretty delicate the first season, so not only do you need to help it out with irrigation during establishment, but it should be fertilized to encourage growth and root development. The information you gleaned from your soil test will determine your fertilization schedule, but you can also use a slow release starter fertilizer like Shaw's 14-25-10 or Espoma's 3-6-3, or very gentle fertilizers, such as Milorganite or Nature's Supreme Dried Chicken Manure.

Try to minimize traffic on the newly seeded lawn until it is well-established. However, don't be afraid to mow when it is needed—generally once the grass reaches 3 inches, you can mow an inch off (with sharp blades!) to ensure sunlight exposure for any later germinating seeds. After that, try to maintain a grass height of 3.5—4 inches.

If you have weed competition in your new lawn, read herbicide labels very carefully. Many will kill your new seedlings along with the weeds!

Cool Season Turfgrass

In our northern Michigan climate, there are three varieties of cool season turf grasses that are most commonly used: Bluegrass, fescue, and rye. Within these grass families, there are many cultivars and mixtures available.

Bluegrass ***21-28 days to Germination***
Often considered the most desirable for a turf stand, bluegrass is the only one of these grasses which will "thicken" a lawn over time. Bluegrasses have rhizomes, an underground stem which allows the plant to send out new roots and shoots. Sod is generally comprised of bluegrasses. Sun-lovers, bluegrasses will not thrive in shade—in fact, bluegrasses planted into the wrong conditions can be very prone to disease.

Fescue ***10-14 days to Germination***
There are two types of fescue seeded into lawns—fine and tall. Fine leaf fescues tend to be more tolerant of partial to moderate shade and are often included in turf mixes. Known for deep root systems, tall fescues can be valuable for drought resistance and resiliency from heavy traffic, but sometimes their growth habit in a mix appears uneven.

Rye ***7-14 days to Germination***
Some people think of rye as an old-fashioned, farm-type or cheap filler grass. What's important to know is some types of rye are far superior than others for lawn use. Perennial ryes are widely used and can be very valuable in the turf stand. They germinate quickly, critical for erosion control, and once established, can be very tolerant of tougher growing conditions like minimal water and summer heat. Annual ryes, while useful for certain applications or in a small percentage of a mixture, should be avoided as they will die out after the first year.

Poa Supina

If you struggle to get grass to grow in the shade, you may consider this specialty seed.