



## **CENTIPEDE TURF GRASS**

*Centipede grass is one of the most commonly grown grasses in the Low Country. It is easily established and requires minimal attention. It requires 4–5 hours of sun to do well.*

### **Mowing**

Maintain sharp mower blades to keep injury of the grass to a minimum. For a healthier turf, cut at 2" in the summer and cut at 1½" in the spring and fall to reduce the chance of disease and increase Winter hardiness.

Mulch in the clippings, except if you are treating for a fungus or if the clippings remain as unsightly clumps. It has been found that clippings **do not** contribute to thatch accumulation.

### **Watering**

Typically, weekly watering should be 1" to 1¼". Use your irrigation system as a supplement to rainfall. Install a rain shutoff device to the irrigation system if possible. Water early in the morning for best results. During the winter months water once a month if there has been no rainfall.

### **Fertilization**

Before performing any fertilization we recommend having a soil test done. Clemson Extension Service can do this for you for a nominal fee. The information you receive is very helpful.

Use a fertilizer such as 16-0-8 or 15-0-15. Fertilize once a year mid to late April depending on when the turf is fully green, follow the package directions for application rates and guidelines. For a stronger root system, use a true winterizer in the fall with no nitrogen or phosphorus. We recommend 0-0-25 applied in early October at a rate of 4 pounds per 1000 sq. ft.

### **Thatch**

One half inch or less is considered good. Excess thatch can be caused by a variety of different practices. It can be kept under control by irrigating the lawn properly, mowing at the recommended height and frequency, monitoring the pH of the soil, and by fertilizing correctly.

If you do have excessive thatch, a "frequent, light top-dressing (<½") has been shown to be the most effective method of reducing thatch." (T.C. Hale, Ph.D.)

### **Weeds**

The best method to control weeds is by keeping a healthy, vigorous turf. In addition, use of a pre-emergent herbicide can keep the majority of weeds from becoming a menace. Use pre-emergent 2 times a year. If you have existing weeds, bring in a sample or a close-up picture so that a salesperson can assist you with a post-emergent herbicide.

*Growing friends for over 50 years.*

## Important dates

for Centipede Lawn

### February 14:

Pre-emergent herbicide for weeds. We recommend Scotts Halts<sup>(1)</sup>.

### March:

Water as needed depending on rainfall.

### April 15:

Fertilize after full green-up (grass has been mowed 2 times) with 16-0-8 or 15-0-15<sup>(2)</sup>.

### Mid May:

Aerate entire lawn with a core aerator.

### June/July:

Use granular Ironite for a quick lush green.

### August:

Water as needed depending on rainfall.

### September 4:

Pre-emergent herbicide for weeds (Halts<sup>(1)</sup>)

### October:

Apply 0-0-25 lawn fertilizer.

### November:

Water as needed depending on rainfall.

### December/January:

Water as needed depending on rainfall.

## Insects

Follow these simple tests to check for grubs, chinch bugs, and mole crickets:

**Chinch bugs** - Remove the ends of a coffee can and push it into the soil at the margin of the suspected damage and fill it with water. If they are present, the chinch bugs should float to the surface in ~5 minutes.

**Grubs** - Cut 3 sides of a 1-ft. square piece of sod 2" deep with a shovel. Pull back the sod and check for white C-shaped grubs. Based on the overall condition of the grass, treat if 8-10 grubs are present in the test area.

**Mole crickets** - Mix 1-2 ounces of dishwashing soap in a 2-gallon bucket or watering pail. Drench a 2 sq.ft. area with the solution. If mole crickets are present they will surface in a few minutes. Since mole crickets are nocturnal insects, perform this test in the evening hours when the ground is moist.

For a 2-3 month control of all three insects, use Bayer Complete Insect Killer for Soil & Turf. *See a salesperson for more information.*

## Disease Control

Disease is ever present in turf albeit at low levels. The most common disease to look out for in Centipede lawns is large patch. Factors that can encourage disease are: low mowing height, excessive or deficient irrigation, compaction from high traffic areas, excessive shade and improper fertilization.

If disease damage is suspected, bring in a photo of the affected areas that we can properly diagnose it. A sample is also helpful. There are liquid and granular treatments available. *See a salesperson for details.*



ABIDE-A-WHILE  
garden center

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