

# SOIL PREPARATION FOR PLANTING TURF

## ACL P TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT

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Soil quality and preparation are important steps in planting a new lawn. Begin by removing the existing vegetation. Use a non-selective herbicide like glyphosphate (Round-Up) to kill the weeds that are growing. The weeds must not be moisture stressed when they are sprayed. Let the Round-Up dry on the leaves for 12 hours. Dig into the soil and get a feel for the soil particles. Is it mostly sandy, loamy, or very fine --clay like? Sandy soils drain quickly, and have good root growth. Clay soils tend to drain poorly and become compacted. Soils which have 50-60% sand and the rest smaller particles are best for a lawn. It's much easier to add fine soils to coarse sandy soils, than to add large amounts of sand to dense clay soils. Most soils are more easily modified by adding composted organic matter such as plant parts, shredded bark, horse or cattle manure. To properly add organic matter, do the following:

- 1). Wet the soil and let it drain 2 days.
- 2). Roto -till the soil as deep as possible.
- 3). Wet the soil again and let it drain 2 days.
- 4). Roto -till again.
- 5). Add the organic matter on top of the tilled soil.
- 6). Roto -till again as deep as possible.

Then level the soil as best as possible. The new soil needs to settle naturally, or by adding water again. Then rake the soil so it has small grooves in it. Place the seed on the soil using a spreader. Put 1/2 of the seed down in one direction and stop. Then put the other 1/2 of the seed in the other direction. Lightly rake the seed in, and roll the soil lightly with a roller.

If sod is installed, repeat the same steps as above. Make sure the soil is firm enough that the sod will not sink in after it is walked on. Roll the sod in two directions and water it twice a day until it roots. When the sod can no longer be picked up by grasping it with your hand in the middle of the sod piece, it is rooted. If bermudagrass seed is being planted, sow that seed at 1.5 lbs of seed per 1000 ft. square and lightly rake the seed no more than 1/4" into the bare soil, and then roll.