



## Customer Education—Lawn Fertilization

866-567-5296



**1 LawnAmerica fertilizer is the best, with higher amounts of quality slow-release N in the mix than others.**

A fertilizer is a material that supplies one or more of the essential nutrients to plants. When these nutrients are limited or unavailable, turfgrass will often show deficiency symptoms such as reduced growth, weak and spindly plants, and poor color. Fertilizer is not turf food, as the plants make their own food through photosynthesis, with proper soil nutrients and water being major components of that process. Fertilization cannot be neglected if you want to maintain a great lawn.

In fact, all turf professionals will tell you that **the best defense against weeds is a thick, well-fertilized turf which helps prevent weed seeds from coming in and helps to choke out undesirable weeds.**

Most of the fertilization supplied by LawnAmerica is in the form of a dry granule. Nitrogen is the most important element supplied by fertilizers, followed by Potassium and Phosphorus. Our fertilizer analysis will vary somewhat during the season, but during the main part of the growing season, we'll use something like a 36-1-3. This means that 36% of the fertilizer is Nitrogen, 1% Phosphorus, and 3% is Potassium. We also have secondary and micronutrients such as Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, etc. in our blends. Phosphorus and Potassium are usually at good levels in most soils in our areas. So while important, we don't include nearly as much of these as we do Nitrogen.

**Nitrogen is the element, which is mainly responsible for the nice, green color of turf.** It also stimulates growth, which is good for the plant. Excessive growth however can put a real strain on your mowing frequency and can actually harm your root system. At LawnAmerica, we try to apply the proper amount of Nitrogen with each application, in order to provide good color, while not overdoing it to the extent of harming the root system. Too much Nitrogen is just as bad as not enough. Many of our fertilizers also contain a good portion of the Nitrogen in the form of a slow-release product, which will provide a longer-lasting and more consistent color response. We also incorporate some organic products into our blends. Especially in spring, we'll have from 50% to 75% of the Nitrogen be in a slow-release form, which prevents the sudden surge of topgrowth in spring, stands up to rainfall better, is more efficient, and will slowly release Nitrogen for up to about 12 weeks.

**All fertilizers need to be watered into the soil in order to do their job.** We always leave watering instructions with each invoice, which tells you when to water. Generally, during the spring and fall immediate watering is not necessary. You can just wait until Nature provides water or your watering system kicks on. During hot, dry summer conditions is the time that it is more important to water in fertilizer with a day of application if possible. It's not that dry fertilizer applied on dry soil is going to burn the turf, because it won't. You can lose some of the nitrogen to the atmosphere through a process called volatilization if dry fertilizer is left on the turf surface for several days without being watered into the soil. If you don't water thoroughly enough, you will increase the chances of turf burning due to hot conditions.

On bermudagrass and zoysia lawns, fertilization begins with our Step 2 in mid-spring and continues through Step 6 in September. Warm-season turf requires more Nitrogen to than cool-season turf such as Fescue. Fescue lawns receive smaller amounts of fertilizer during most treatments, but only during spring and summer, with an organic soil amendment applied to fescue during summer.