

Turf Grass Varieties

Floritam is the only turf grass recommended by nurseries in the Texas Coastal Bend. It is a St. Augustine grass developed by Florida State and Texas A&M 35 years ago. It is very tolerant to drought, heat and salt. It is moderately tolerant to shade. It is resistant to Brown Patch, chinch bugs, iron chlorosis and the St. Augustine Decline (SAD) virus. It is very fast growing and will crowd out weeds.

Bermuda grass is very tolerant to drought and heat and moderately tolerant to salt. It is not recommended because it is hard to control and it does very poorly in shade. Many people consider it a weed.

Zoysia grass is very tolerant to heat and moderately tolerant to drought and salt. It is not recommended because it is very slow growing, does very poorly in shade and is high maintenance, requiring frequent mowing.

Basic Turf Maintenance

- Root development is the most important consideration when installing turf. The clay layer in sod grass must be kept moist, but not over wet, to allow the roots to grow through and into the soil below.
- When mowing, no more than one-third of the blade should be cut to promote root development.
- In general, turfgrass needs about one inch of water (rain and/or irrigation) per week. A rain gauge and an irrigation system audit can tell you how much water the lawn is getting. Audit your system by placing empty tuna or cat food cans around your lawn and running the system for 30 minutes. This will tell you how long your system needs to run to provide one inch of water. It will also show how evenly your system distributes the water.
- The simplest way to determine if your lawn needs water is to walk across it and see if you have left footprints. If so, your lawn needs water.
- Early morning is the best time to water your lawn. There is less evaporation, so more water gets to the roots, and the blades have a chance to dry out, so there is less chance of fungal development.
- NEVER use weed-and-feed products on your lawn. They are very harmful to trees and shrubs.
- Get a soil test to determine which nutrients your lawn needs.
- Spring and fall are the best times of year to fertilize.
- The best application for your lawn is a one-inch (at least - two is better) layer of compost, watered in well, in October. It is also good to do it in spring, too.

Deficient nutrient	Symptoms
Nitrogen	Leaves are small and light green; lower leaves lighter than upper ones; not much leaf drop; weak stalks.
Phosphorus	Dark-green foliage; lower leaves sometimes yellow between veins; purplish color on leaves or petioles.
Potassium	Lower leaves may be mottled; dead areas near tips and margins of leaves; yellowing at leaf margins continuing toward center.
Calcium	Tip of the shoot dies; tips of young leaves die; tips of leaves are hooked-shaped.
Magnesium	Lower leaves are yellow between veins (veins remain green); leaf margins may curl up or down or leaves may pucker; leaves die in later stages.
Sulfur	Tip of the shoot stays alive; light green upper leaves; leaf veins lighter than surrounding areas.
Iron	Tip of the shoot stays alive; new upper leaves turn yellow between veins (large veins remain green); edges and tips of leaves may die.
Manganese	Tip of the shoot stays alive; new upper leaves have dead spots over surface; leaf may appear netted because of small veins remaining green.
Boron	Tip of the shoot dies; stems and petioles are brittle.

Mulches

1. Conserves water
2. Reduces weeds
3. Prevents soil compaction
4. Moderates soil temperatures
5. Provides nutrients
6. Prevents erosion

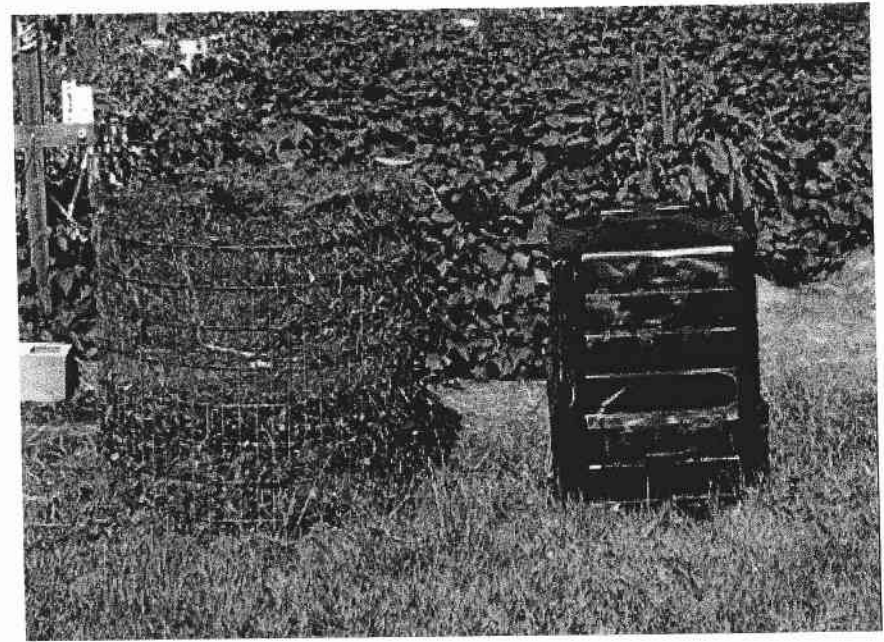
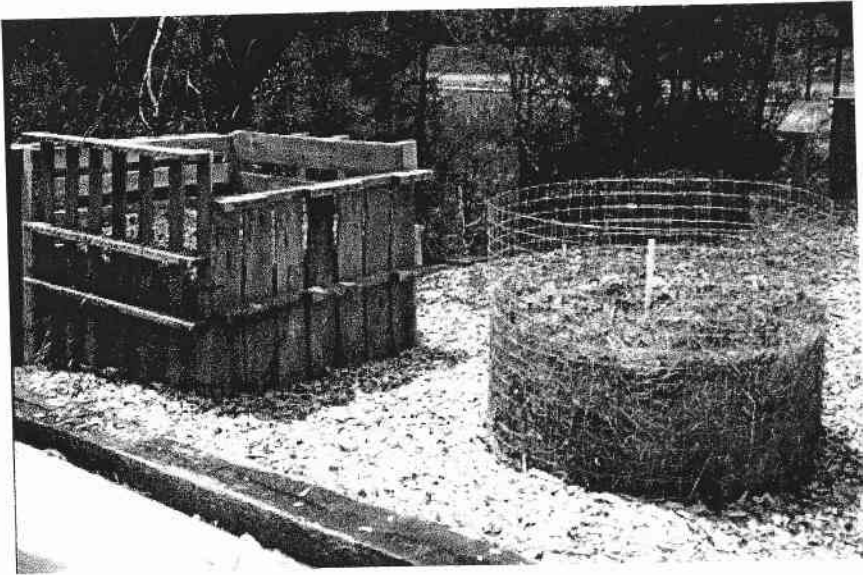
Appropriate Maintenance

1. Reduced mowing
2. Once-a-year mulching
3. More efficient watering
4. Better plant health
5. Moderate fertilizer application – usually twice a year
Right time
Right amount
6. Periodic irrigation checks
7. Properly timed insect and disease control
8. Elimination of weeds

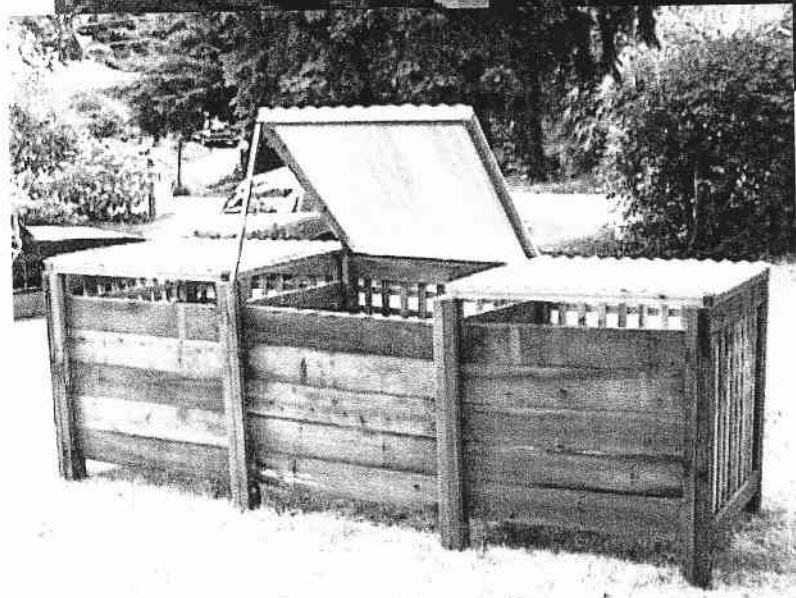
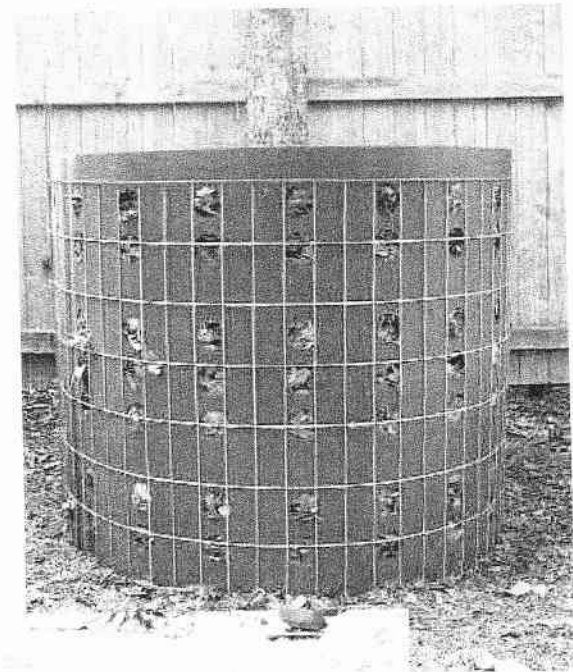
Don't Bag It – Leave it a Lawn



Bins



Bins



Suggestions for Composting

Suitable for Compost

Grass, other than Bermuda
Veggies
Fruit
Leaves
Coffee Grounds
Tea Leaves
Egg shells
Grass cuttings in moderation
Ammonium sulfate
Shredded paper

Unsuitable for Compost

Bermuda grass
Thorny Plants (Roses, Coral Bean, etc.)
Thick plant stems
Branches
Woody Plants
Wood
Animal products e.g. cheese, meat etc

RESOURCES

1. Go to: <http://aransas-tx.tamu.edu>
2. Click on : Links
3. Click on: Horticulture
4. Click on: Composting resources
5. Click on: Composting and Solid Waste Management

OR

**Ask us: Texas Agrilife Extension
301 N. Live Oak
Rockport, TX. 78382
361-790-0103**

Drop in: 8 to 5, Monday through Friday

Earth-Kind Landscape Course Homework

Week 2

Continue the scale drawing of your yard. (Step 1 of “Planning the Perfect Landscape”)

Begin working on Step 5 of “Planning the Perfect Landscape”

Build a compost bin and begin using it.

Make plan for soil amendments.

Think through turf choices.

Locate the following documents on your computer for next week:

Gardener’s Math
The 7 Layers of Landscape Design
Landscape Design Technology

aspmastergardeners.org
aspmastergardeners.org
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