



# Maine School IPM Fact Sheet

## **Turf Establishment**



**The foundation of Integrated Pest Management** requires steps to ensure turf gets a good start when lawns and fields are first established. Turf can be established from seed or sod. Soil preparation is the same for either method and is the foundation for growing quality turf. Below are guidelines for establishing turf.

### **Turf establishment involves these steps in the order listed:**

- \* Soil test
- \* Lime to adjust pH based on soil test
- \* Apply starter fertilizer at the rate of 1.0 lb. Phosphorous / M
- \* Roto-till amendments into the top 4" of the soil mix
- \* Finish grade
- \* Firm soil and finish rake
- \* Apply a complete fertilizer at the rate of 1.0 lb. N / M
- \* Seed or sod

### **Sod establishment**

- \* Select top quality sod from a reputable sod grower
- \* When root mix is sandy material, request sod grown on sandy soil; if not available, purchase washed sod.
- \* Sod should be laid quickly, rolled and then irrigated with sufficient water so as to wet the soil beneath.
- \* Maintain moist soil beneath the sod by irrigating on a daily basis or as needed for the first three weeks.
- \* Restrict use until sod is well established (minimum of 4 - 6 weeks).

### **Seed establishment:**

- \* Select top quality seed varieties from a reputable seed dealer.
- \* Seed at half rate in one direction and at half rate in a perpendicular direction
- \* Seed in August - September or May - June
- \* Lightly rake seed into the top 1/8 - 1/4" of the soil
- \* Roll to firm seed in contact with soil
- \* Mulch
- \* Irrigate lightly and frequently (maintain moist seedbed) until seed germinates
- \* As turf develops, increase amount of irrigation and interval between irrigation
- \* Irrigation will be critical to proper establishment over the first two months
- \* Restrict use until turf is well established, usually 2 - 4 months
- \* Athletic fields require a full year to mature before use