

Here at Red Hen Turf Farm, we strive to make Do-It-Yourself Lawn Care Do-able. We hope you find this guide and our website helpful. And remember, if you EVER have any questions or concerns, give us a call. We're here to help!

Last Update: 02/01/2025

Planting Grass Seed

STEP 1: Decide on your METHOD OF SEEDING. The best method for incorporating seed is to use a machine called Slit Seeder (also called a drop-seeder, slicer-seeder, or a power over-seeder), which you can rent at garden equipment rental centers. Core aerating and then seeding into the cores is also a decent way to incorporate seed. Casting seed with a spreader and then lightly raking to incorporate is probably the third best method, and casting seed by hand and lightly raking is the least preferred way. For a much more detailed guide on seeding, do a Google search for **Purdue's "Establishing Turfgrass Areas From Seed"** guide or ask Red Hen to provide you with a copy.

STEP 2: Loosen and level the soil. Use a rake on the final pass to create small ridges and valleys. Put your seed down at the rate found below. **TIP: Ask about the use of TENACITY or MESO Herbicide with seeding.**

STEP 3: If you have NOT used a Slit Seeder or Core-Aeration, then lightly rake the soil two times to incorporate the seed into the ground. Some seed will be visible on the surface. Seed buried **deeper than ¼ inch** will not come up.

STEP 4: VERY IMPORTANT: You only get one chance to germinate seeds correctly. Water often enough to keep the soil moistened all of the time while the seeds germinate. **Not enough** water will kill the sprout. **Too much** water can leave less than ideal results. The simple word is to keep it **MOIST all the time.** When you see new plants **reduce** watering.

DID YOU KNOW ??
In the Michiana Area,
Aug 15 thru Sept 15
(EARLY FALL) is typically
the best time to plant
grass seed?
(Unless it's a SHADY
AREA... Ask us why)

2nd best time ... Late Nov thru early-Mar
(This is called a Dormant or Winter Seeding)

3rd best time ... Early Spring
(Mar thru late-May)
... Unless you have a LOT OF SHADE, then
SPRING IS Better than EARLY FALL

AVOID SUMMER SEEDING!

WHAT IS GERMINATION ??
Basically this term refers to the growth process that occurs when the seed absorbs sufficient moisture to start sprouting and growing. Different species of grass seed take different amounts of time to **GERMINATE.**

Red Hen's Most Popular Seed Mixes ... and Rates of Application	New Lawns (lbs./1000 sq.ft.)	Overseeding (lbs./1000 sq.ft.)
100% Kentucky Bluegrass Sod Mix (KYB)	4	2
Tall Fescue / Kentucky Bluegrass Sod Mix (FES)	8	4
Greenskeeper Custom Mix	5	3
Premium Shady Mix	5	3
Super Shady Mix	5	3

Seed Species	How Long for Germination
Kentucky Bluegrass	3 Weeks
Tall Fescue	7 – 14 Days
Ryegrass	3 – 10 Days

SHOP LOCATION: 29435 Darden Rd, New Carlisle, IN 46552

FIND US AT: 574-232-6811 * turf@redhenturf.com * redhenturf.com * facebook.com/redhenturf

Red Hen Carries
Sod
Seed
Fertilizer &
Erosion Products

SHOP HOURS: Monday thru Friday 8A-4P (EST)

*** ASK ABOUT AFTER-HOURS PICKUPS & WEEKEND SOD DELIVERIES ***

GOOGLE "Red Hen Turf Farm" for Updated Details on HOURS & HOLIDAY CLOSURES



Red Hen Turf Farm's TIPS for Successfully Planting Grass Seed, continued

STEP 5: Fertilize after planting per chart below. We recommend using Starter Fertilizer (like a 12-12-12) @ 6-8# per 1000 Square Feet. **Buy enough for a Second Application** (see Step 7 below) **Do NOT use a fertilizer that has crabgrass or broad-leaf preventer (or any other kind of herbicide or pesticide)**

Seed Species	1st Fertilization with Starter Fertilizer in ...	2nd Fertilization with Starter Fertilizer in ...	Fertilize with "Straight Fertilizer" or "Weed and Feed" in ...
Kentucky Bluegrass	4 weeks after planting	30 days after 1st application	30 Days After 2nd Application of Starter Fertilizer
Tall Fescue	2 weeks after planting	30 days after 1st application	30 Days After 2nd Application of Starter Fertilizer
Ryegrass	1 week after planting	30 days after 1st application	30 Days After 2nd Application of Starter Fertilizer

STEP 6: Keep **watering** as needed to prevent the soil from **drying** out but do **not** keep the soil **saturated**.

STEP 7: Fertilize again with the **Starter Fertilizer**, **30 days** after the first fertilization.

STEP 8: Mow when the grass needs it at the optimum mowing height. Mow frequently enough so as not to remove more than 1/3 of the leaf blade at a single mowing

Seed Species	Optimum Mowing Height (Inches)
Kentucky Bluegrass	2.0 - 3.5
Tall Fescue	2.5 - 4.0
Ryegrass	2.0 - 3.5

STEP 9: (OPTIONAL) After waiting **60 days** from the date you planted, you could apply a broadleaf herbicide if needed to control **broadleaf weeds**. **Grassy weeds** are difficult to kill with herbicides, so mowing is your best choice at controlling. Call us for more info.

STEP 10: Fertilize with a "straight" fertilizer (like our 25-0-10) or a "weed and feed" **30 days** after the second fertilization. TIP: Better yet, ask us about Red Hen Turf Farm's **Customized Fertilizer Program, Designed Just for YOU**.

DORMANT SEEDING aka WINTER SEEDING aka FROST SEEDING

YES! You read that right. You can plant grass seed in the Winter once the ground has frozen! This is a great option if you missed the northern Indiana preferred seeding window of August 15th to September 15th.

A "dormant seeding" aka "winter seeding" is the second best time to seed in our area, and is typically done between the last week of November through March. This is called "dormant seeding" because the seed will lie dormant until the soil temperatures warm in April or May.

A major benefit of dormant seeding is that as the soil heaves and cracks during the winter, crevices are created for the seeds which provide ideal germination conditions. Dormant seeding is easier to schedule than spring seeding, because spring rains often make it difficult to seed after March.

Favorite Link to Learn More about Grass Seeding. turf.purdue.edu/homeowner-publications