

LIVING TURFGRASS FOR HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS & HEALTHY HUMANS



LIVING TURF

- Provides a variety of environmental, economic, and health benefits
- Increases soil organic matter
- Filters rainwater to keep toxins out of drinking water

Turfgrass is grown on over 40 million acres of land in the United States, making it one of the most abundant crops grown in America.

Unlike most commodity crops, which are generally grown in rural communities, turfgrass is spread across urban, suburban, and rural landscapes—home lawns, parks, sports fields, golf courses, cemeteries, roadsides, and campuses. This distribution makes turfgrass the most visible “crop” to most Americans, not only shaping daily experiences, but also impacting our ecosystems, our health, and our economies.

This factsheet highlights the benefits of living turfgrass and provides guidance on economical and ecological strategies to manage turf.

**GET TO
KNOW YOUR
cool season
grasses**



Temperature	60-75 °F	68-77 °F	60-75 °F	60-80 °F
Drought Tolerance	High	Low	High	High
Shade Tolerance	Moderate	Low	Moderate-High	Moderate
Maintenance	<p>Water: 1-1.5 inches/week</p> <p>Mowing: 2.5-3.5 inches</p> <p>Fertilizer: Apply nitrogen-rich fertilizer once in early spring and once in late summer/early fall</p>	<p>Water: At least 1-1.25 inches/week</p> <p>Mowing: 1.5-2.5 inches</p> <p>Fertilizer: Apply once in early spring and once in late summer/early fall</p>	<p>Water: 1 inch/week in summer, with infrequent watering throughout the year</p> <p>Mowing: 2.5-3.5 inches</p> <p>Fertilizer: Apply nitrogen-rich fertilizer once in early spring and once in late summer/early fall</p>	<p>Water: 1 inch/week</p> <p>Mowing: 2.5-3 inches in spring and fall, 3-4 inches in summer</p> <p>Fertilizer: Apply nitrogen-rich fertilizer once in early spring and once in early fall</p>

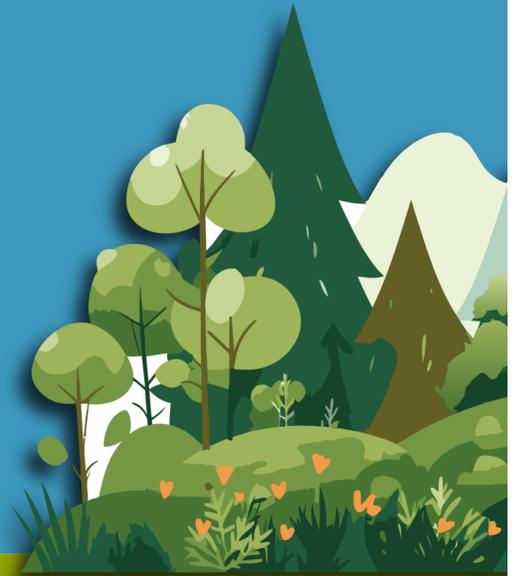
BENEFITS OF LIVING turfgrass systems



*MAKING POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO
HUMAN HEALTH, THE ECONOMY,
THE ENVIRONMENT, AND SOCIETY*

Environmental

- Increases soil organic matter
- Stabilizes soil, mitigates runoff, and improves soil health
- Protects water quality and filtration
- Provides evaporative cooling to reduce cooling energy requirements
- Decreases glare
- Diminishes noise pollution
- Provides wildlife habitat
- Prevents pests and invasive species



Cultural

- Serves as foundation for recreational activities
- Improves and enhances all aspects of health
- Provides common spaces to strengthen community relationships and social harmony
- Creates safety zones for fire breaks and roadsides
- Reduces risk of sports and recreational injuries



Thinking about the environmental costs of lawn care? Let's make your lawn greener with simple tips that make an impact.

Simple Steps to
**REDUCING
YOUR
LAWN'S
Footprint**

Fertilization

- Consider applying organic fertilizers, like compost
- For synthetic fertilizers, consider options with low phosphorus concentration (a 10:1 nitrogen to phosphorus ratio is recommended)
- Add clover or other legumes to generate nitrogen without or with reduced application of fertilizer

Mower Choice

Make the switch from gas-powered equipment, which emits carbon dioxide and other pollutants to electric-powered mowers, edgers, string trimmers, blowers and other equipment.

Mowing Height & Frequency

A two-inch mowing height is optimum for:

- Lawn health
- Broadleaf weed prevention

Mow once every two to three weeks, or as necessary.

Irrigation

Apply around **one-quarter inch four times per week**, totaling one inch per week. This reduces water consumption while providing a healthier, greener lawn.



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