



AMAIZEINGLY GREEN

Fixing those bare spots in your lawn.

If you used AMAIZEINGLY GREEN to fertilize your lawn this spring, I suggested you postpone overseeding for a few weeks. For me this is now 3 weeks since I applied the corn gluten meal, so the natural herbicide properties will be wearing off. The soil temperature also has to be 15 degrees for grass to germinate and we haven't had enough warm days to reach that point. So as soon as it warms up it's time to fix the bare spots.

You need two ingredients to do this properly. Firstly you need some grass seed. If your lawn was sodded, as mine was, it is likely that most of the grass is Kentucky bluegrass. Please don't overseed with that. It is a very high maintenance grass that doesn't do well unless you follow the high input model of lots of water and lots of fertilizer. Over time you want to establish more drought tolerant and lower input grasses.

There are a variety of high quality grass seeds available. The recommended application is an endophyte enriched ryegrass mixture. Locally this product is available under the President's Choice label and it is not expensive. The ryegrass is drought tolerant and it designed to be low input. Over time you should plan to have the low maintenance grass replace the Kentucky bluegrass.

The endophyte is a fungus that induces tolerance to chinch bugs, billbugs, sod webworms and army worms. I don't know what all of these look like, but resistance to them means I don't have to worry about them.

I like to overseed using compost to cover the bare spots after I take a rake to loosen the soil. There's usually a reason why the grass died in that spot and adding some topsoil or compost makes the area more fertile. If you haven't got any compost you can go to the local landfill site and buy some. Or you can get some good topsoil from a local supplier.

The grass seed needs to be covered, so rake lightly and press down lightly with your feet, or use a roller. You then need to water thoroughly and keep the spots moist until the seed has germinated. Use a sprayer on the end of the hose so you don't wash away the soil. Wait for the soil temperature to get up to 15, or an air temperature into the 20's for a few days before you seed, or you'll be waiting for warmer weather before the seed germinates.

Top dressing the whole yard with a few centimeters of compost is a good idea. That requires more seed and will change the composition of your lawn more quickly than spot seeding.

If you have aerated, you will fill up the holes with seed and compost, and that's fine. The hole will still have a high permeability. The holes from aerating fill up naturally over time with clippings and dirt anyway.

Keeping a dense grass cover and letting it grow to 3 inches or 7.5 cm is the key to making the grass beat out over the weeds. If the weeds are shaded they will not grow.

Our AMAIZEINGLY GREEN sales campaign is continuing. If you've already done your lawn, buy it for the garden and flower beds. Buy it on-line at Rotarycollingwoodsgb.org and use the code 54505. For the more traditional shoppers we have retail outlets at GRAPHIC WEAR HOUSE, 140 Hurontario Street, Collingwood and COXY'S SMALL MOTORS located at 9485 Highway# 26 E. Collingwood. Both of these locations are donating their time and space to Rotary. We are also selling through the 100 Mile Market at 55 Trowbridge Street in Meaford. They are open Thursday to Saturday.

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