

# **KIWICARE®**



## **HEALTHY LAWNS AND GRASSES**

Kiwicare Lawn Maintenance Calendar

[www.kiwicare.co.nz](http://www.kiwicare.co.nz)

# HEALTHY LAWNS AND GRASSES

## Grasses, sedges and rushes

Most grasses have long, relatively narrow leaves. The growing points are close to the ground so they are unaffected by grazing and mowing.

Similar to grasses are the sedges and rushes. The three groups can be hard to tell apart. The following rhyme may help:

*'Sedges have edges,  
Rushes are round,  
Grasses have nodes from their tips to the ground'*

## Identification

Grasses, sedges and rushes have inconspicuous flowers. They pollinate by wind.

### Grasses

- Leaves in 2 rows.
- Stems are hollow with swollen nodes.
- Flowers do not have obvious petals.
- Flowers enclosed by papery bracts, often four.
- Each flower produces one 'seed'.



### Sedges

- Leaves are in 3 rows.
- Triangular stems.
- Flowers have no obvious petals.
- Flowers enclosed by one bract.
- Seed is either triangular or oval in cross-section.



### Rushes

- Leaves usually cylindrical.
- Cross walls.
- Flowers have 6 straw coloured sepals.
- Fruits are 3 sided capsules containing 3 seeds or many small seeds.



## Lawn Grasses

The composition of lawns varies widely. Many of the grasses used in lawn seed mixtures are specially bred for characteristics such as fine leaves, hard wearing, persistence, and disease and pest resistance.

Lawns are 'natural' habitats for grasses. Less desirable grasses in lawns include Paspalum, summer grasses, narrow leaved carpet grass and in heavily worn areas track rush. Grasses like kikuyu; couch/twitch and buffalo grass are weeds in fine turf but are sometimes chosen as the lawn grass in warmer parts or where the lawn needs hardwearing grass.



# Over-seeding

Seed mixtures often include Browntop (*Agrostis* species), Chewing's fescue (*Festuca rubra*), and ryegrasses.

- [LawnPro Lawn Thickener](#) contains a balanced selection of these with a fertiliser and soil conditioner for ideal over-seeding of lawns in spring and autumn.



## Lawn Thickening

[LawnPro Lawn Thickener](#) is an innovative product for easy application of seed and nutrients to lawns. The Even-Flo™ spreader device makes even application of granules as easy as walking on the lawn. The unique ball design spreader creates a perfect, even spread of granules across the lawn, giving great results every time.

## New Product

### Benefits and Features

- Easy to apply – ergonomic handle design, flip open spout, walk over lawn and let the spreader evenly apply the granules.
- Blend of fescue, ryegrass and browntop seeds with special coating to improve water retention and germination.
- Seeds are coated with wetting agent, fungicide and bird deterrent.
- Covers up to 100 m<sup>2</sup>
- NPK 6 : 2.5 : 3.7
- Combination of immediately available nutrients and slow release to give strong germination and growth.
- Gypsum to improve soil condition and drainage.
- Humic acids and organic ingredients improve soil structure and microbial balance.

# Fertilising and Sweetening

Lawns are areas of the garden that require an input of nutrients because nutrients are constantly removed through mowing. Lawn grass needs a balance of the three main nutrients; Nitrogen (N), Phosphorous (P) and Potassium (K) plus a variety of micro-nutrients including iron and sulphur. However, too much nitrogen or other nutrients, available too quickly to grasses, will make them grow quickly and in a straggly manner. This will be unsightly, and will require more mowing. The mowing will then remove much of the nutrient that has just been added. It is therefore important that NPK and other nutrients are added at an appropriate level for greening, healthy and sustained growth, but not straggly rapid growth.

- Kiwicare [LawnPro 7 Day Green](#) and [Lawn Thickeners](#) have nutrient levels adjusted for best results; giving thick green leaves and strong deep roots and not straggly rapid growth.
- [LawnPro Lawn Thickeners](#) contains a mix of immediately available and slow release fertilisers to provide appropriate nutrient levels for the growth of new grass and existing grasses.

The condition of lawn soils is also very important for lawn health.

- Lawn soils should be of neutral or slightly alkaline pH (above 6.5) - [LawnPro 7 Day Green](#) is 70% lime which raises pH of acid soils. This helps prevent acid loving weeds such as hydrocotyle and moss.
- Soils should be well draining and clay soils should be treated with gypsum to break up the dense clay to allow aeration and drainage of soils – [LawnPro Lawn Thickeners](#) contains gypsum for conditioning the soil.
- Soils should have a healthy balance of soil micro-organisms which assist in breakdown of nutrients and uptake by grass roots – [LawnPro Lawn Thickeners](#) contains humic acids to promote a healthy balance of soil micro-organisms.

# Weed Control

Healthy thick swards of lawn grass are resistant to disease and out-compete weeds, reducing the need for applications of herbicide. Also herbicides work best on growing lawns which have adequate nutrient.

- Use [LawnPro 7 Day Green](#) and/or [LawnPro Lawn Thickeners](#) to ensure a healthy sward.
- [LawnPro Turfclean](#), [Turfclean & Green \(+D-Thatch\)](#) and [All-in-One](#) have been formulated for the control of the widest range of broadleaf weeds in New Zealand lawns. The combination of 3 active ingredients is balanced to ensure the most common weeds in New Zealand lawns are controlled with not risk of burning the fine lawn grasses grown as lawns in New Zealand.
- It is good weed control practice to use [LawnPro Turfclean](#) as routine and alternate it with [LawnPro Prickle and Hydrocotyle](#) every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> treatment.
- For lawns prone to Onehunga prickle weed apply [LawnPro Prickle and Hydrocotyle](#) before the weed flowers and produces its prickly seeds.
- In spring and autumn apply [LawnPro Mossclear](#) to kill moss and its spores. Then scarify to remove dead moss and apply [LawnPro 7 Day Green](#) to raise pH and make the area unsuitable to moss growth.



## Pest Control

Several insect pests will attack lawn grasses – e.g. grass grub eat the grass roots, porina caterpillar eat grass crowns.

- Apply [LawnPro Protect](#) or [LawnPro Lawnguard](#) granules in late summer and autumn to prevent lawn damage.
- At the first sign of damage apply [LawnPro Protect](#) or [LawnPro Lawnguard](#) granules.

## Disease Control

Most lawn diseases are caused by fungi, although grass species vary in their susceptibility to particular diseases. Wet lawns are most susceptible to disease.

- At first signs of disease treat with (LawnPro) [LawnPro Fungus Control](#), follow up with [LawnPro Mossclear](#) to kill fungal spores.
- Balance thatch layer with [LawnPro D-Thatch](#).

## Watering

Lush green healthy lawns need water for growth. However the water is taken up by roots and not leaves; wet leaves promote disease and shallow water evaporates off before roots can absorb it. When required water should be applied so that it seeps deep where deep rooting grasses can reach it and it will not evaporate off.

- When required, water lawns thoroughly in the morning. Thorough watering once or twice a week is preferable to light watering frequently.

# Mowing

Mowing gives an even attractive tidy lawn. However, it is important not to mow lawns too short.

- Fine browntop/fescue lawns mow at 20 mm.
- Ryegrass lawns mow at 30-35 mm.
- Raise the mower height another notch for the final cut of the year in autumn/winter.

Mulching lawns (leaving the clippings) is not recommended; the dead grass becomes a place for disease spores and weed seeds to survive and although the mulch will suppress some weeds it will also suppress grasses.

- Collect clippings when mowing.

Blunt lawnmower blades damage the grass leaves leaving ragged edges that will brown off and are more susceptible to disease.

- Ensure your lawn mower blades are sharp and clean.



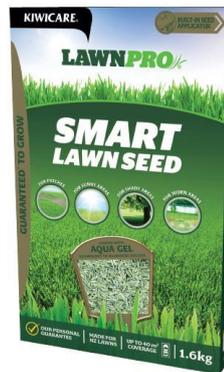
# Sowing a New Lawn

Kiwicare [LawnPro Smart Lawn Seed](#) and [Smart Patch Mix](#)

The Smart Seed easy-to-use, built-in seed applicator is perfect for applying seeds and will allow greater accuracy and even distribution across a wider area. Simply tear back the side strip to reveal our built-in seed applicator.

- Ideal for sunny or shady areas.
- Great for fixing patches or sowing a completely new lawn.
- A blend of durable seed varieties which will give you a lush green lawn.
- Contains the perfect blend of gentle fertilisers and soil improvers to give your new grass a great start.
- It's the only seed you need!

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# LAWNPRO



# Kiwicare.co.nz

For information, advice and our interactive  
problem solver

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