



IN THE CUCUMBER AND BEAN patch with her two grandchildren, Eric and Jennifer, Mrs. Lula Fletcher of 20515 Osmus, Livonia, points out the bean plant tall enough for Jack to climb. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Home & Garden

Foresters help stock nation's woodpile

The woodman who harvests timber and grows more in its place has a lot to do with the way we live and the house we live in.

The home building industry, in fact, couldn't get along without professional foresters.

It is estimated that wood is used to frame and enclose about 80 per cent of all single-family homes in the U.S.

Most of the lumber used in construction comes from the country's commercial forests, lands generally entrusted to the foresters' care.

This gives foresters a critical voice in determining how best to stock the nation's woodpile for present and future homebuilding needs.

Most foresters see intensive forest management - scientific planting, insect control and efficient harvesting balanced by environmental safeguards - as the way to ensure sufficient timber supplies.

According to the American Forest Institute, it is good forest management, and professional foresters, that enable the forest products industry to produce more than one-quarter of the country's wood products from 13 per cent of the available U.S. forest base.

Helping to manage forests is only part of the foresters' job. Other concerns are watershed, wildlife and recreation, soil protection and use of forest range for livestock grazing.

Fertilize now for rhubarb

For a good rhubarb crop next year, fertilize now, says Robert Herner, extension horticulture specialist at Michigan State University.

He recommends a technique called "side-dressing." Apply the fertilizer along the row 1 1/2 feet from the rhubarb crowns. Use 1 1/2 pounds of 33-0-0 fertilizer for every 100 feet of row,

or three to four pounds of 10-10-10 per 100 feet.

Mulch or cultivate to control weeds. "Fertilization now gives the rhubarb a head start on storing food in its roots to carry it through winter," Herner says. "It also increases chances of a good crop next summer."



52-year-old tree from managed forest

246-year-old tree from unmanaged forest

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First aid for lawns

If your lawn has small purple spots, rings of dead grass or areas sprinkled with white powder, it's time for first aid.

Tiny purple spots, says Joseph Vargas, turfgrass pathologist at Michigan State University, are the first signs of a fungus disease that attacks Kentucky bluegrass during cool, moist weather. It also attacks red fescue during the warm weather in July and August.

To control the disease, Vargas recommends chemical treatment with Aclonine-Thiram, Fore, Daconil 2787 or Dyrone.

Mowing to a height of two or three inches and removing the clippings will check the disease, he says.

"If you're establishing a new lawn, consider planting varieties resistant to the disease," he suggests. These include the Baron, Adelphi, Bonnie Blue and Nugget varieties of Kentucky bluegrass.

CIRCLES OF DEAD grass with healthy appearing grass in the center are an indication your lawn has the fusarium blight infection, the specialist says. The problem is also caused by a fungus and symptoms usually appear during dry periods. Again, Kentucky bluegrass is often the victim.

To control fusarium blight, Vargas recommends two applications of Benomyl (Tersan 591) at two-week intervals. If applied at the first sign of the disease, this should be an effective control.

Use eight ounces of Benomyl with enough water to cover 1,000 square feet of lawn. Drench it to the root zone before it has a chance to dry on the foliage.

"Light frequent watering of infected turf will also help minimize fusarium blight," Vargas adds.

LAWN AREAS that look as if they'd been dusted with flour have a case of powdery mildew. Damp, shaded Kentucky bluegrass lawns are most often affected, and the Merion variety is most often affected.

To control powdery mildew, use Karathane or sulfur in combination with Benomyl every three or four weeks.

For badly infected areas, Vargas recommends reseeding or sodding with a red fescue and a resistant Kentucky bluegrass like Nugget or Warren's A34. The mixture of red fescue and Kentucky bluegrass will give you a nice looking, healthy and more disease-resistant lawn.

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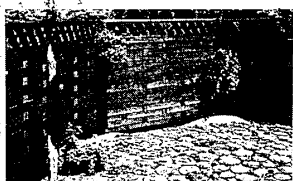
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