

Sod Or Seed? Both Good If Done Correctly

The many newly originated bluegrass and fescue varieties have given great impetus to the sod industry. Sod carefully grown from top flight, weed-free seed is commonplace even in garden centers formerly not prone to stock perishables.

Thus the same fine seed that is found in top seed blend boxes, can be had as living grass, its sprouting and early

growth completed for you through the services of a sod grower. Naturally, sodding is more costly than is seeding, the growing and handling must be compensated for.

On the other hand sod provides an "instant" lawn while several weeks are needed to gain full cover from a seeding.

Are there any other advantages favoring either

seeding or sodding? The Lawn Institute says, nothing of material consequence. Carefully grown sod produced on land free of pernicious weeds provides the same fescues, bentgrasses and bluegrass that you would sow to your own lawn.

BARGAIN basement sod, like cut-rate seed, may be another matter. You could be

introducing into your lawn for the first time such pests as quackgrass, billbugs, grass diseases, or seeds of annuals such as crabgrass which may already have been controlled on your own property.

However, almost all soils contain some weed seeds, and even if you seed your own lawn, nuisances like spurge, purslane, knotweed and shepherd's purse will

probably sprout from residual seed in the soil. None of these weeds are carried in the well-cleaned lawnsed marketed sods.

These and familiar farm weeds such as pigweed, lambsquarters and velvetweed, although often abundant in young turf, mostly disappear in competition with the grass and because they can't stand mowing.

Any remaining weeds are rather easily eliminated with effective, modern-day weed killers.

The only exception are perennial pest grasses such as nimblewill, timothy or quackgrass; special pains should be taken to see that these are not brought into the lawn because it will be difficult to eliminate them later.

A common misconception is that sodding a lawn need not be as painstaking as solving of seed would need be. Actually, the soilbed should be equally well prepared for either kind of planting, and neither seed nor sod will thrive on a rock-hard base into which it cannot root.

THE SOIL is best cultivated, mixing in fertilizer (and lime if needed). Level, and then sow seed or lay sod. Some authorities feel that a seeding rooted directly into endemic soil has some advantage over a transplanted grass started elsewhere.

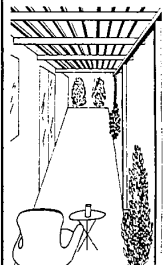
But this should not be a significant factor if sod is properly laid on a prepared soilbed, rolled firm, and kept watered for the several weeks needed until it is firmly rooted.

Lawngrasses regenerate about half of their roots each year, and so long as there is not a barrier (like layer of humus) at the base of the grass should root well. The old roots of transplanted sod cease to function, and new rootlets penetrate the soilbed.

The chief concern is not whether you choose seed or sod, but the quality of the grasses you select.

There are many excellent new varieties of Kentucky bluegrasses, fine fescues, bentgrasses and perennial ryegrasses from which to choose, all of them fine-textured and a credit to the lawn.

Except in certain difficult climates where the better grasses do not thrive, it is well to avoid either seed or sod that contains coarse-kind components (which are so listed on the seedbox label).



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