



Celebrating 22 Years!

ask the landscape professional  
Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

EMAIL OR MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:  
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QUESTION THIS WEEK:

What is the difference between using chemical fertilizers on my lawn and organic ones? Are there really that many benefits to going organic?... Laurie

Linda's Answer:

Hi Laurie - There are a lot of reasons why all aspects of organic lawn care are better, but for now I will just tell you about the fertilizers.

Synthetic chemical fertilizers tend to contain a huge amount of nitrogen in order to keep the grass green, but only 35% of that actually reaches the grass roots. The rest leeches out into the soil and pollutes waterways. The 35% that does reach the roots is way more than the plant actually needs, and forces the grass to grow lush very rapidly. While this might sound great, it in fact puts a lot of stress on the grass plants and weakens them, allowing pests and diseases to enter your lawn. Then you are forced to use MORE chemicals on your lawn and you just open up a vicious cycle. The grass ends up looking worse and worse as the years wear on, as it simply cannot handle the onslaught of chemicals. Plus, if you continue to fertilize through the summer time when grasses are naturally trying to conserve their energy in the heat, you will only end up feeding the heat-loving summer weeds that are hiding in your lawn. And they LOVE to be fertilized!

Don't be fooled into believing the promises of those "Weed and Feed" products either; they contain toxic chemicals that are poisonous to anyone touching the lawn and they often don't even work like they say they should. Fertilizer (the "Feed" part) is intended for the whole lawn, but herbicides (the "Weed" part) are meant to be used as spot treatments for weed patches. When you use the combination of both mixed together, you are needlessly spreading poisons all over your lawn.

Organic fertilizers do not contain excess nitrogen; they provide slow-release nitrogen that will feed the grass over time. Keeping the lawn clippings and mulching dead leaves into your lawn rather than bagging it all up also helps to grow a healthy lawn that can take care of itself in the long run.



The best thing you can do for your lawn is to build a healthy eco-system in the soil. Your first step is to test your lawn and find out what it actually needs. Our Organic Lawn Care Program can help you with this process. Call us any time!

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 22 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects.

Sprigs & Twigs is scheduling appointments for Garden Design, Landscape Maintenance, Tree Care Services, Custom Stonework and Custom Carpentry Services.

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