

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 of the Week: *Now that spring is here, I need to buy some grass seed, there are so many choices and different labels, I am always confused about what kind to get.*

When you buy grass seed there are two very important things to remember: #1 Forget what it says on the front of the package (e.g., shade, part-sun, etc.) and #2 you get what you pay for! Manufacturers spend a great deal of money marketing specialty grass mixtures that lead you to believe you should get several different types for the various conditions you have on your property. That's not necessary and it is a waste of your money. The best approach when you buy seed is to look for the package that is closest in content to 1/3 Kentucky Bluegrass, 1/3 Fescue and 1/3 Perennial Rye. It may be something like 30% of each. It will be the most expensive on the shelf, but it is well worth it. Cheaper grass seed will have more fillers and weeds seeds in the package. Kentucky Bluegrass is good for full sun, but you never want a lawn with just Kentucky Bluegrass. It also takes a long time (i.e., several weeks) to germinate and months to produce dense turf. It is a very "thirsty" and "hungry" grass (i.e., it needs lots of water and fertilizer to thrive) and it's prone to disease, so you want other types of grass growing as well. Fescue grass is good for some shade and sun and Rye grass is a fast sprouting perennial grass used to hold the soil while other grass plants get established.

When you see grass seed bags on the shelf labeled "Shade Mix" that DOES NOT MEAN THE GRASS GROWS IN THE FULL SHADE. No grass grows in the full shade, it never has and it never will. There is more money wasted every year by homeowners who mistakenly think they can put shade mix down and expect a lawn in the densest shade in their yard. Here are a few choices for the shade where grass won't grow:

- 1) Use mulch - we can deliver both to you and spread it if you need**
- 2) Plant groundcovers- we can help you select the best and deliver them to your doorstep for you to plant or for us to plant**
- 3) Plant a shade perennial garden- that is our specialty, we can design and install one for you!**

The absolute best time of year to plant grass is mid-August through late September and the second best time is coming up from late April/early May through late June, before the hot weather strikes.

If you need any help with your lawn, give us a call we'll be happy to help.

Sprigs & Twigs

100% Organic Shredded Brown Mulch!
Bulk Deliveries of 10 yards or more!
\$35/yard

Linda K. Lillie is the President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc, the premiere landscape tree care & lawn care company in SE Connecticut for the last 17 years. She is a 1995 graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation work.

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