

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: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie, Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales Ferry, CT 06335

Question of the Week: *I had someone do a lawn repair for me this spring; he added top soil and seed. He told me he was using a special coated seed that I didn't have to water. No grass ever grew and my lawn is now full of weeds. What went wrong?*

As you already realized, you hired someone who didn't know what he was doing and gave you poor advice. There are several things that could have gone wrong. Here are a few.

1) No matter what someone tells you or what the seed bag says, grass needs to be watered for it to grow! While there are grass seeds on the market today that are "coated" and touted to need less water, they are about twice the price of normal seed and, in my opinion, a waste of your money. Certainly, in the case of this customer, the marketing hype led to a misunderstanding that the seed did not need ANY water. Absolutely NOT true.

2) If you apply grass seed to soil and you haven't done a soil test first, you run the risk of not only wasting your money but getting poor results too! The single most important thing you can do for your lawn is to have a soil test done and find out its pH. Grass grows best with a pH of around 6.5 (slightly acidic). About half the lawns we have tested this year have a pH below 6.0 and as low as 4.2 – this is an extremely acidic soil that will cause grass to struggle or just not grow at all. Weeds, on the other hand, love acidic soil and will thrive. If your lawn is full of weeds and not grass, suspect pH issues. If your pH is low, it is easily corrected by lime application(s). Lime, however, takes months to be effective, so this fall you should get the lime applied and do your seeding in the spring of 2014. As I have written about previously, Sprigs & Twigs can soil test your lawn. We will provide you a comprehensive written report, analysis and proposal for any recommended actions necessary. We will evaluate pH and a number of other important components of your soil. We charge \$100 + tax for the soil test and analysis. You can drop off a soil sample at our office at 8 Hurlbutt Road, Gales Ferry (bring in a baseball-size handful in a plastic bag), or we can come out and take a sample at your property.

NEXT WEEK: *Since the month of September is the best time of year to plant grass, next week I'll pass along some lawn care instructions to help you get the best results.*

Sprigs & Twigs is a fully organic company that offers an Organic Lawn Care Program for your lawn. Visit our website or call us if you would like more information.

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Avenger
100% Organic
Weed Killer
Retailer

Linda K. Lillie is the President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc, the premier landscape tree care & lawn care company in SE Connecticut for the last 17 years. She is a 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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