



Jonathan Green
QUALITY LAWNS SINCE 1881

LAWN CARE GUIDE

DISCOVER THE SECRETS TO A GREAT LAWN

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Black Beauty Lawn, NJ



Black Beauty Lawn, IL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

5 WELCOME MESSAGE

Get to know what makes our family business unique.

6 BEFORE YOU SEED

Discover which type of grass seed is best for your yard.

8 IMPROVE YOUR SOIL

Want to know the secret to a healthy lawn? It's your soil.

12 HOW TO SEED

Brush up on the basics of seeding a new or existing lawn.

14 MAINTAIN YOUR LAWN

Tips and tricks to fertilize, spread product, and mow.

18 HOW TO WATER

Four must read tips before turning on your sprinkler.

20 LAWN PROBLEMS

Essentials for tackling weeds, disease, and insects.

26 OUR KEY PRODUCTS

Explore our grass seed, soil foods, and fertilizers.

WELCOME TO JONATHAN GREEN



“

Our family has been growing great-looking lawns for six generations!

Jonathan Green is a family business started in 1881. We have dedicated ourselves over the years to developing quality lawn care products that grow beautiful, healthy lawns.

Our philosophy for incredible lawns is simple:

Improve Your Seed

Improve Your Soil

Improve Your Lawn

We believe that having high-quality seed and healthy soil is the recipe for a naturally hardy and problem-resistant lawn from the soil up.

Whether you're new to lawn care and don't know where to begin, or you're a seasoned pro in need of a quick refresher, we've created this simple guide with you in mind to ensure that you have all of the tips to prepare and maintain a healthy lawn that you can be proud of.

**Click here to
watch a video
on our family
business!**

BEFORE YOU SEED

When to Seed

The best times to seed a lawn:

- Fall (mid-August to mid-October)
- Spring (mid-March to mid-May)

Knowing what type of seed is best for you is important, but knowing when to apply your seed is crucial to ensuring the grass germinates and survives. The best times to plant seed are in the fall and spring (mid-August to mid-October for fall and mid-March to mid-May for spring). These seasons have optimal temperatures for lawn health and growth. Fall is ideal for seeding because there is less competition from weeds and the soil temperatures are warmer from months of hot summer weather. On the other hand, consistently warm air temperatures, and increased rainfall makes spring another great time to seed.

In order for the seed to germinate, soil temperatures must be above 55°F.

Click here
to watch
our Grass
Seed video!



Black Beauty Lawn, NJ

How to Choose Grass Seed

Are you ready to begin the process of growing your perfect lawn, but you're stumped on which grass seed to purchase?

Start by asking yourself these key questions:

- **How many hours of sun does my lawn get each day?**
- **How much grass seed do I need?**
- **Does my lawn experience high traffic from kids or pets?**

Once you have these answers, you can choose the best grass seed for your lawn based on the name of the mixture. Keep in mind that you may need more than one type of grass seed for your specific property. For example, a [shade blend](#) is needed for under trees and areas alongside large structures that do not get much sun. However, if the rest of your lawn gets 8 or more hours of sun per day, it's best to get a heat-tolerant, [sunny blend](#).

Jonathan Green Black Beauty® grass seed mixtures come in many varieties including [Sunny](#), [Heavy Traffic](#), [Dense Shade](#), and more! Black Beauty grass has a naturally dark-green color, a waxy coating to preserve moisture, and a uniform texture. Its naturally occurring endophytes make it insect and disease-resistant and its ability to grow roots up to 4 feet deep saves you money on your water bill.

Calculate Coverage

To determine the square footage of the area you want to seed multiply the length of your lawn by the width. Make sure to subtract any non-lawn areas like driveways, patios, and pools from the total square footage. Knowing your square footage will help you to calculate how many pounds of seed you will need to purchase. You can find the coverage amount for overseeding a lawn on the front of most grass seed bags.

Black Beauty® **Grass Seed**

is naturally dark-green in color, has a uniform texture, and a waxy leaf coating to preserve moisture.



Black Beauty **Sun & Shade**

Ideal for lawns in full sun to partial shade (4 to 8 hours of sun). Blends well into most cool season lawns.

Germinates in 10 to 14 days.

IMPROVE YOUR SOIL

The Importance of Healthy Soil

Healthy soil is the key to creating a lawn that is naturally resistant to weeds and disease. Healthy, porous soil with the correct pH, and flourishing microbial populations will create an environment that will allow your lawn to thrive. If the pH of your soil is too acidic or too alkaline, your grass is not able to absorb all of the nutrients it needs to grow thick and strong. If your soil is hard and compacted, grass roots cannot grow deeply into the soil and will struggle to obtain water and nutrients.

But we have the solution! Testing and treating your soil is simple and can be done in a few easy steps. Follow the directions below to test your lawn to determine what products you need to treat your soil.

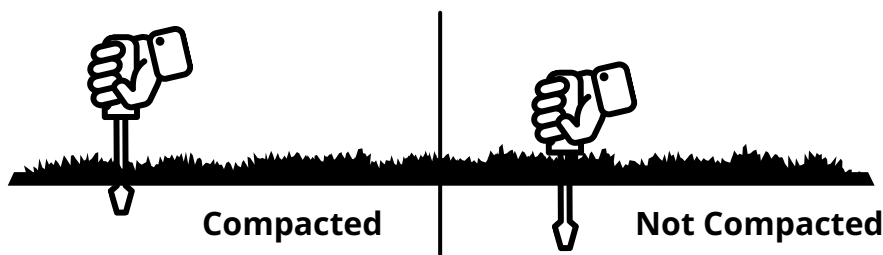
Signs of Compaction

- Areas of hard bare dirt where weeds and grass cannot grow.
- Water puddling or pooling in the low areas of your lawn.
- Water running quickly off of the high areas of your lawn.
- Soil too hard for a shovel to pierce.

Compaction

Has your lawn experienced heavy traffic from kids, pets, lawnmowers, or cars over the years? Then your soil might be compacted! If your soil is too dense, water and oxygen cannot filter through the soil, and grass roots will be shallow. Failing to address compaction will cause your lawn to look thin and unhealthy over time. To [test your soil for compaction](#), push a long screwdriver into your lawn. If you cannot easily push the screwdriver up to the handle (six inches) then your soil is probably compacted.

The Screwdriver Test



How to Fix Compacted Soil

Core Aeration

If your soil is compacted, you can use a core aerator, which pulls plugs of soil out of the ground, making room for more water, oxygen, and nutrients to penetrate deeper into the soil. However, after a few months, the soil will re-compact because the holes left by the core aerator will fill back in.

Soil Amendments

Adding organic content and soil softeners like Gypsum to the soil is the key to permanently alleviating compaction issues. Jonathan Green [Love Your Soil®](#) naturally aerates the soil, while stimulating microbial life. It also breaks up clay and loosens compacted soils, which improves root penetration, grass growth, and root mass.

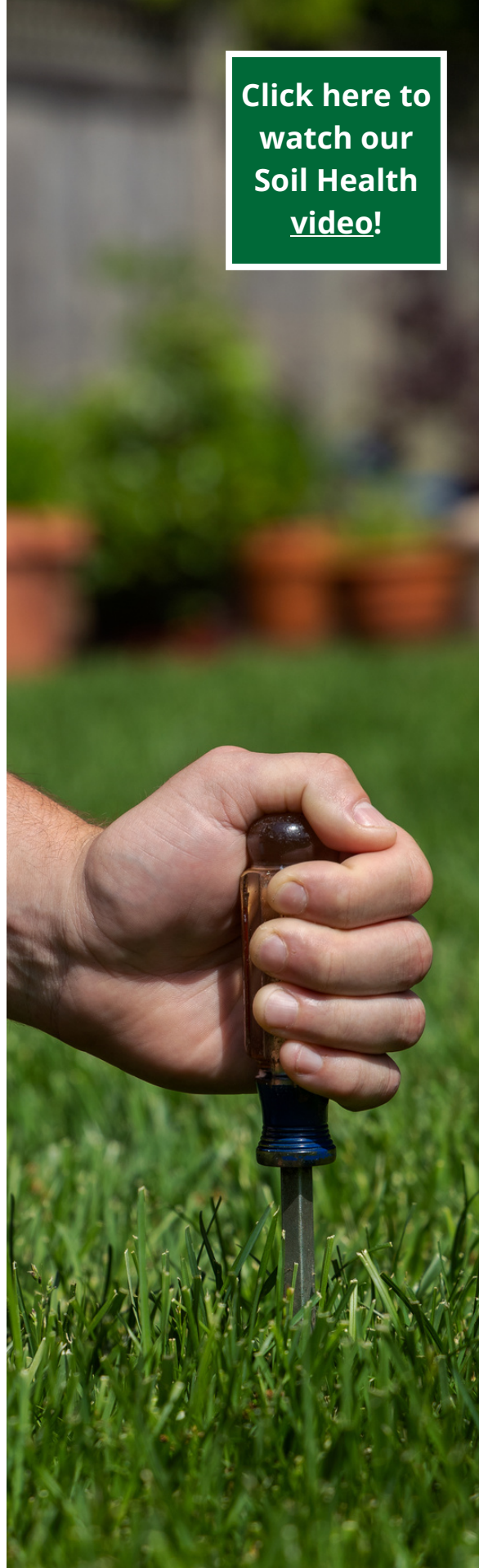
[Love Your Soil®](#) also helps to stimulate soil microbial life. The bacteria and fungi in the soil break down organic matter converting it into nutrients that grass roots can absorb.



Love Your Soil **Natural Soil Food**

Loosens hard compacted soil. Increases root mass and drought tolerance. Spurs soil microbes to break down trapped soil nutrients.

Click here to
watch our
Soil Health
[video!](#)



Soil pH

Often when lawn troubles persist despite applications of weed controls and fertilizers, the problem is your soil, not your grass! Healthy soil with a correct pH is one of the keys to a beautiful lawn. If your soil is too acidic or too alkaline, weeds will thrive and your lawn will not be able to absorb necessary nutrients from the soil.

- **Lawn grasses thrive in slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH ranging from 6.2 to 7.0.**
- **Lawn weeds thrive in very acidic or very alkaline soil.**

Test the pH of your soil and then follow the directions below based on your results. You can use an at-home [soil pH test kit](#) for fast results, however, if you want a complete soil analysis, send a soil sample to your state university cooperative extension service office.

How to Adjust Acidic Soil

If your soil is too acidic with a pH below 6.2, you will need to raise the pH. Soil acidity builds up over time from excessive rainfall, the breakdown of organic matter such as leaves, fertilizers, and acid rain. Many people believe the best way to adjust acidic soil is to add limestone. However, traditional limestone works very slowly and many bags are needed to properly cover your lawn. Pelletized lime works faster, but only contains fast-acting calcium carbonate. Jonathan Green [Mag-I-Cal Plus® for Lawns in Acidic & Hard Soil](#) not only contains fast-acting calcium carbonate to rapidly adjust soil but also loosens hard soil with specially-formulated gypsum for increased absorption of nutrients and water. Mag-I-Cal Plus® tackles pH and compaction, while [Mag-I-Cal®](#) only addresses soil pH, but is 25% more effective.



Mag-I-Cal Plus for Lawns in Acidic + Hard Soil

Helps to rapidly raise soil pH, increasing nutrient absorption. Loosens hard soil promoting air and water penetration.



Mag-I-Cal for Lawns in Acidic Soil

Helps to rapidly raise soil pH, increasing nutrient absorption. If your pH is below 5, apply once a month for three months then retest the soil pH.

How to Adjust Alkaline Soil

If your soil is too alkaline with a pH above 7.2, then you will need to lower the pH. When soil is too alkaline and compacted, air, water and nutrients cannot be successfully absorbed by the roots, and the grass will not grow properly. Jonathan Green [Mag-I-Cal Plus® for Lawns in Alkaline + Hard Soils](#) lowers the pH and loosens hard soils. The active ingredients in this product are sulfur and gypsum which correct soil pH, loosen compacted soil, and are important nutrients for plant growth.

Just as fruits and vegetables need healthy soil to grow in, lawns are the same! The healthier your soil is, the better your lawn will be able to resist disease and weeds! By testing and amending your soil prior to seeding, your lawn will have a strong foundation for optimal growth.

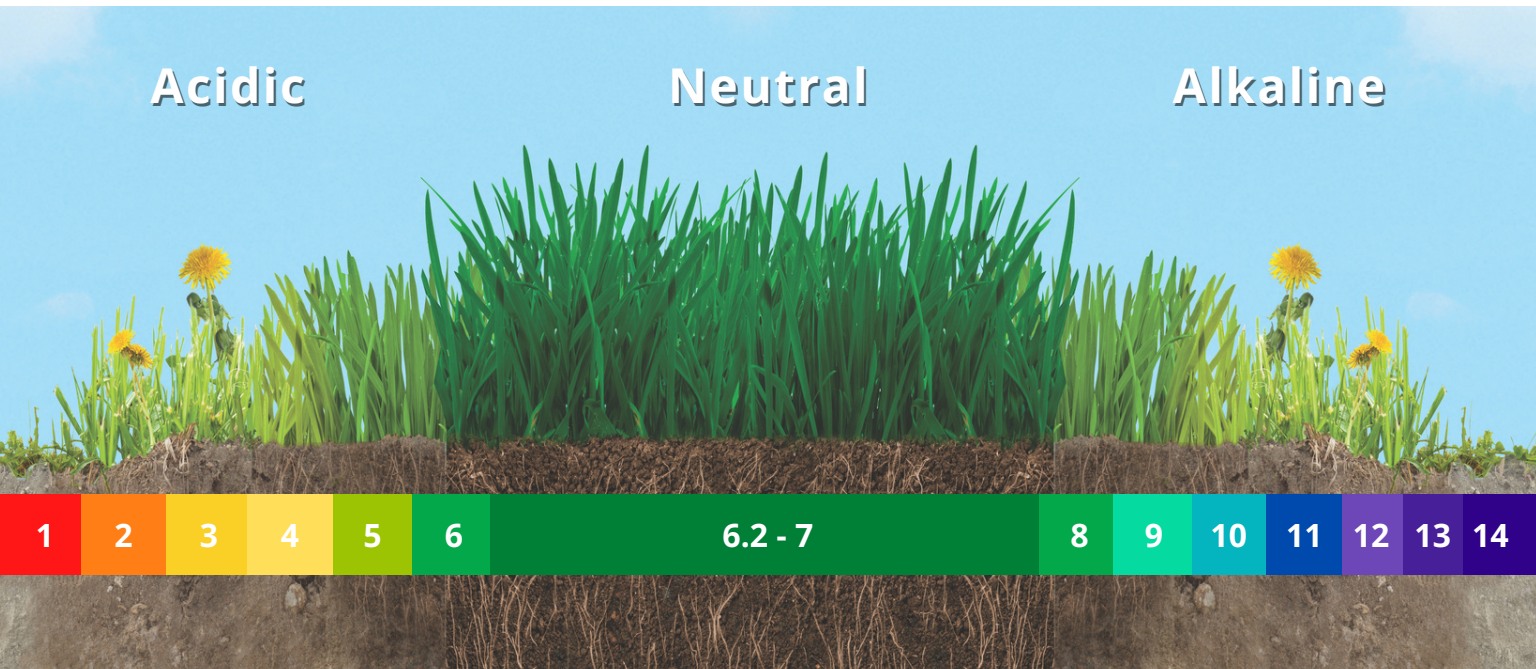
As you can see in the image below, the more acidic or alkaline the soil is, the more weeds exist. A lawn that is planted in soil that has a correct pH has the ability to absorb necessary nutrients, resulting in stronger grass that can out-compete weeds.



Mag-I-Cal Plus for Lawns in Alkaline + Hard Soil

Helps to rapidly lower soil pH, increasing nutrient absorption. Loosens hard soil promoting air and water penetration.

How Soil pH Affects Lawns



HOW TO SEED

New Seeding

When seeding a new lawn, start by filling in holes and depressions with topsoil and leveling the ground so that the surface is even. Then, rake the ground thoroughly to create ridges and grooves in the soil. Breaking up the soil is especially important if your soil is compacted. Once you have seeded, rake again to make sure there is good seed-to-soil contact. Do not bury the seed because it may not grow when covered with more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch of soil.

Overseeding

First, mow the lawn at the lowest mower setting before seeding to allow the seed to reach the soil. Then, vigorously rake the existing grass to remove thatch and create a loosened soil seeding surface. If you have a larger area to rake, then you may want to rent a de-thatching machine. It is very important to create grooves in the soil because these slits allow the grass seed to properly lodge and take root. Lastly, lightly rake the ground to incorporate the grass seed into the top $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the soil. This ensures good seed-to-soil contact and will help maximize seed germination.



Black Beauty Lawn, NJ

Steps to Seed a Lawn



Rake

Rake the ground vigorously with a metal rake. This step is especially important whether you are newly seeding or overseeding. When newly seeding, raking makes grooves in the soil. When overseeding, raking removes any debris or thatch. In both cases, raking ensures good seed-to-soil contact.



Spread

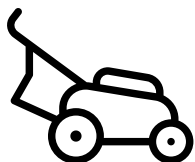
First spread the seed along the perimeter of your lawn. Then, apply half of the seed with a spreader in one direction (north to south) and the remainder in the opposite direction (east to west). Use the [spreader settings](#) on the back of the bags to determine the proper rate. For best results, lightly rake the newly spread grass seed to incorporate it into the top ¼ inch of the soil. Sweep any excess grass seed off of your sidewalks and patios and back onto the lawn.

Pro Tip:
Spread a [new seeding fertilizer](#) that is high in phosphorus when seeding or sodding.



Water

For best germination, keep the seedbed moist, but not soaked. Water twice per day for 10 minutes until all of your seed has germinated (about 4 weeks after seeding). If the seeds dry out after germinating, the young seedlings may not survive. If you overwater, you risk washing the seeds away before they take root.



Mow

Mow your lawn when the new grass has reached a height of 3 to 4 inches. Make sure the mower has sharp blades. Be careful not to take off more than ⅓ of the grass blade at a time, as low mowing stresses new grass plants and encourages the growth of weeds.

MAINTAIN YOUR LAWN

Click here to
watch our
Fertilizer
[video!](#)

Fertilize

Keeping your lawn fed with essential nutrients is a major factor in maintaining the overall health of your lawn. Just as humans need all of the essential nutrients in food to live and grow, so does your grass! Give your lawn the right fertilizer (or lawn food) 3 to 4 times a year to encourage growth and protection from the elements.

Grass plants need 3 key macronutrients in order to thrive: nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P), and potassium (K). These make up the N-P-K analysis found on all fertilizer bags, which tells you the percentage of each element in the fertilizer by weight. Nitrogen greens up the grass blades, phosphorus is important for strong root growth, and potassium works as an overall vitamin for your grass. That is why in spring you should use a high nitrogen fertilizer to wake up your lawn from winter hibernation; when seeding you should apply a high phosphorus fertilizer, and in the fall apply a high potassium fertilizer to help your lawn survive winter damage.

Annual Lawn Care Program*



Early Spring: March - April

Fertilize your lawn and prevent grassy weeds with [Veri-Green plus Crabgrass Preventer](#).



Late Spring: May - June

Fertilize and control existing broadleaf weeds in the lawn with [Veri-Green Weed & Feed](#).



Summer: July - August

Amend your soil with [Mag-I-Cal Plus](#) Soil Food to correct the pH and loosen compacted soil.



Fall: September - October

Apply a fertilizer high in potassium like [Winter Survival Fall Lawn Food](#) to prepare your lawn for winter.

*Above is a basic plan for an established lawn that is not overrun with weeds. You cannot seed in the spring with this lawn plan. Each lawn is different though and should be treated as such. To create a lawn care plan tailored to your specific needs, explore our website at JonathanGreen.com.



Spreader Tips

We recommend using a spreader when applying lawn care products. They ensure an even application, allow you to cover a large area in a small amount of time, and keep chemicals off your skin.

Here are our top spreader tips:

- Mow your lawn before applying products.
- Check the product label for accurate application rates.
- Always close the hopper before filling the spreader.
- Fill the spreader with product on a hard surface, not on the lawn.
- Walk at a slow and steady pace to ensure even distribution.
- When making turns close the hopper.
- Sweep any product off of hard surfaces back onto the grass.

Visit
**[JonathanGreen.com/
SpreaderSettings](https://JonathanGreen.com/SpreaderSettings)**
to find the settings for
your spreader today!





Mow

It is important to follow best practices when mowing your lawn to avoid damaging the grass. Mowing regularly encourages growth. The thicker your lawn, the more likely it is to crowd out weeds.

Follow these mowing tips to keep your lawn healthy and looking beautiful:

- Mow new grass once it reaches a height of 3 to 4 inches.
- During the growing season keep the mowing height at 3 inches.
- Never cut off more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the grass blades.
- Alternate your mowing pattern to help your grass grow upright, and to avoid making ruts in the grass from your mower tires.
- To avoid putting stress on the grass, mow in the morning from 8 am to 10 am, or the late afternoon from 4 pm to 6 pm.
- Keep your mower blades sharp. Dull blades can shred the tips of the grass, making them more susceptible to disease.
- The last mow of the season should be 2 inches in height. This will help prevent snow mold damage over the winter.

HOW TO WATER

Water is an essential component of all living things and your lawn is no exception. Every lawn requires a specific watering schedule depending on the region, weather, and time of year. Here are the answers to the most common questions about watering your lawn:

How Much Water Does My Lawn Need?

On average, 1 to 1 ½ inches of water per week (including rainfall) is enough for most lawns. A rain gauge is an easy way to measure the amount of water your lawn is getting from rainfall.

When is the Best Time to Water?

Water your lawn in the morning between 5 am and 10 am. This allows time for the water to be absorbed by the grass without it evaporating too quickly from the heat of the sun. Watering late in the day or in the evening does not allow the lawn to dry enough and may promote fungus.

How Often and How Long Should I Water My Lawn?

For established lawns, water 2 to 3 times a week for 15 minutes per zone. During the hot summer months or times of drought, you should increase this time to 30 minutes per zone. For a new lawn, water for 10 minutes twice a day in the early morning and late afternoon until the grass has reached a height of 4 inches. The key to watering a newly seeded lawn is to make sure the soil stays moist, but not soaked.

How Do I Know if my Lawn is Getting Enough Water?

To check the watering depth, poke a long screwdriver into the soil immediately after watering. If you can slide the screwdriver 6 inches deep before it becomes more difficult to push, then you are watering enough. If not, you need to adjust the length of time that your sprinklers are running. Using Jonathan Green [Love Your Soil®](#) will help increase soil porosity, allowing the water to penetrate down to the roots.



LAWN PROBLEMS

Now that you know how to prep, seed, and maintain your lawn, it's time to talk about a few of the lawn problems that can arise. Even with the best lawn care practices in place, your grass can still be vulnerable to issues such as weeds, insects, and diseases. Don't fret! Here's how to identify and tackle unsightly issues that threaten your lawn:

Weeds

One of the most common (and most annoying) lawn problems is weeds. These unsightly plants are easy to spot, as they stick out like a sore thumb in lush, green lawns. Below we've outlined what you need to know before tackling weeds in your lawn.

Weeds can be classified into two groups: Grassy and Broadleaf. Grassy weeds are usually light green with thick, rough leaves. Broadleaf weeds, such as dandelions, are easier to spot due to their pronounced flowers and deep taproots.

Grassy Weeds

Grassy weeds, like crabgrass and barnyard grass, are best controlled before they germinate. Pre-emergent is a form of weed control that creates a barrier at, or just below, the soil's surface that is strong enough to prevent grassy weed seeds from germinating. Applying a pre-emergent in the spring is the best way to eliminate most grassy weed issues and prevent them for up to 4 months. If you happen to be a little behind, however, it's not too late! Use Jonathan Green [Veri-Green with Crabgrass Preventer](#) to kill crabgrass even after it has germinated up to the three-leaf stage.

Crabgrass



Green Foxtail



Goosegrass



Dallisgrass



Broadleaf Weeds

Controlling broadleaf weeds requires more patience, as they must be killed after they've germinated. Common examples of broadleaf weeds to look out for are dandelions and clover, which are easy to spot due to their colorful flowers. Use Jonathan Green [Veri-Green Weed & Feed](#) to get rid of broadleaf weeds in your lawn. This product kills 3 times as many broadleaf weeds as other brands. Make sure to wet your lawn before spreading the product so that it adheres to the weeds. Do not water this product in or apply it when rain is forecasted for the next 48 hours as this will wash away the weed control. Remember, weeds tend to grow in patchy, thin spots, so the best prevention is a thick, lush lawn.

Pro Tip:
Most weed controls target either broadleaf OR grassy weeds. Not both so read carefully before you buy!

Types of Weed Control

When choosing how to control your weeds, make sure you do your research! If you only have a few weeds here and there, it may be best for you to hand pull them. However, if most of your lawn is weeds, you will probably need something a little more convenient like a granular weed control that you can apply to your entire lawn with a [spreader](#). If you decide to apply weed control, make sure to choose one that will kill the type of weeds that you have in your lawn. Most weed controls target either broadleaf OR grassy weeds, so make sure to read the product label before purchasing.

Weed controls are categorized as either pre-emergent, post-emergent, or in a few cases, both. Post-emergents control weeds after they have already germinated. While pre-emergent weed control usually cannot kill a weed that has already sprouted and emerged from the soil. Pre-emergent weed control is effective for grassy weeds, like crabgrass.

Dandelion



White Clover



Chickweed



Creeping Charlie





Choosing a Weed Control

	<u>Veri-Green</u> <u>Weed</u> <u>& Feed</u>	<u>Lawn</u> <u>Weed</u> <u>Control</u>	<u>Veri-Green</u> <u>Crabgrass</u> <u>Preventer</u>	<u>Season-Long</u> <u>Weed</u> <u>Preventer</u>	<u>Corn Gluten</u> <u>Weed</u> <u>Preventer*</u>
Prevents Grassy Weeds			✓	✓	✓
Kills Broadleaf Weeds	✓	✓			*Prevents broadleaf weeds
Contains Fertilizer	✓		✓		✓



Refer to the label for the specific weeds that each product controls.



[Click here to
watch our
Weed Control
video!](#)



Lawn Fungus

Lawn fungus can cause major damage, so it's best to prevent it! Fungus spores exist in every lawn, and most of the time they are beneficial. However, when your lawn is stressed, and conditions are right, these spores begin to multiply and become problematic.

What Causes Lawn Fungus?

Excessive heat and humidity are the leading causes of fungus. Fungus often occurs in times of stress, such as drought, long rainy seasons, and over-watering. The combination of heat and moisture creates an environment that allows the fungus to develop, causing brown and dry spots all over your lawn. When water stays on the lawn for too long, the fungus may develop and spread.

Tell-Tale Signs of Fungus

- Brown or “dead” looking spots on grass blades.
- Dead or dry spots on your lawn (despite irrigation).
- Discolored patches that grow in size.
- Threadlike or powdery coatings on grass blades.

How to Prevent and Repair Fungus

- Water early in the day (never at night).
- Sharpen your mower blades and mow at a higher setting.
- De-thatch your lawn.
- Rake out patches of dead grass.
- Apply a [fungicide](#).
- Reseed bare spots.
- Apply a fungicide as a preventative early next summer.



Grubs & Insects

Insect problems most commonly arise during the summer months. Grubs eat grass roots in the soil, causing unsightly brown spots all over your lawn. Other insects, like chinch bugs, sod webworms, ants, and ticks can also present problems for your lawn or the people and pets using it.

One way to know if you have grubs is to pull on the dead grass in your lawn. If it easily comes out of the ground or comes out with very few roots attached to it, you likely have grubs. You can also cut a 12-inch square out of your lawn to see if there are grubs in the soil. If there are 5 or more grubs per square foot, you have a grub infestation and should treat your lawn.

For grubs and other severe insect problems, use Jonathan Green [Natural Grub & Insect Control](#).



Natural Grub & Insect Control

Eliminates grubs and insects naturally without harming important pollinators like bee populations!

OUR KEY PRODUCTS

Grass Seed



Black Beauty® Original

Extremely heat tolerant. Thickens and strengthens lawns. Our only 100% tall fescue grass seed blend.



Black Beauty® Ultra

Our most popular grass seed mix. Grows a lush dark-green lawn in full sun to partial shade. Excellent heat resistance.



Black Beauty® Sun & Shade

Grows well in both full sun and partial shade. Naturally insect and disease resistant. Fills in bare spots quickly.



Black Beauty® Dense Shade

Germinates and establishes quickly. Perfect for use around mature trees and shrubs where sunlight is limited.



Black Beauty® Sunny

Great heat and drought tolerance. Waxy leaf coating preserves moisture and protects the grass from disease.



Black Beauty® Heavy Traffic

Tough, durable varieties for lawns where children and pets play. Perfect for backyards, sports fields and curb strips.



Black Beauty® Patcher

Our brand new bare spot repair 3-in1 product patches bare spots in just 14 days! Ideal for sun or shade areas.



Black Beauty® Heat & Drought

Our most heat-tolerant grass seed mixture can withstand heat up to 100°F. Contains Texas Bluegrass.

To see our entire product line visit JonathanGreen.com!
Click on the product bags to learn more.

Soil Food



Mag-I-Cal® Plus for Acidic Soils

Helps to rapidly raise soil pH increasing nutrient absorption. Loosens hard and compacted soil for better rooting.



Mag-I-Cal® Plus for Alkaline Soils

Helps to rapidly lower soil pH increasing nutrient absorption. Loosens hard and compacted soil for better rooting.



Mag-I-Cal® for Acidic Soils

Rapidly raises soil pH. Calcium and humates adjust soil pH and stimulate microbial life. Encourages nutrient absorption.



Love Your Soil® Natural Soil Food

Loosens hard, compacted soil. Spurs soil microbes to break-down trapped soil nutrients. Rich in humates.

Fertilizer



Veri-Green Lawn Food

Analysis: 29-0-3
Plus 4% iron for maximum greening. Continuous feeding for up to 3 months.



Veri-Green for Seeding & Sodding

Analysis: 12-18-8
High in phosphorus for deeper roots. Apply when seeding. Feeds for up to 2 months.



Winter Survival Fall Lawn Food

Analysis: 10-0-20
Potassium repairs summer damage, and helps prevent winter disease.



Organic Lawn Food

Analysis: 10-0-1
Organic fertilizer, safe for children and pets. Only food grade materials, no manures.



Black Beauty Lawn, NJ

SHOW US YOUR LAWN!

From April to October, send us a photo of your Jonathan Green lawn to enter our monthly contest for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to wherever you buy your Jonathan Green products. A grand prize winner will be chosen from the list of monthly winners and are eligible for a \$500 grand prize!

JonathanGreen.com/contest



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Lawn Care
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