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G81-558 Tall Fescue Lawn Calendar (Revised April 2004)

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Tall Fescue Lawn Calendar

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MOWING

March 20 to April 10	Clean lawn of debris (i.e. rocks, sticks, etc.) Mow lawn at 2 inches and remove clipping debris.
April 10 to June 15	Mow lawn at 2.5 to 3 inches (2.0-2.5 for dwarf type). Mowing frequency should be dictated by growth rate. Mow at least on a weekly basis when actively growing.
June 15 to August 30	Raise mower height to 3 to 3.5 inches (2.5-3.0 for dwarf type) and maintain mowing frequency.
September 1 to November 15 (or last mowing)	Gradually lower mowing height to 2.5 inches. Mow on a weekly basis.
Alternative Mowing Schedule	To maximize rooting and stress tolerance maintain height at 3.0 to 3.5 inches for the entire growing season.

FERTILIZING

April 20 to May 10	Fertilize with 1.0 lb. of actual nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. Slow release fertilizer carriers are preferred. Apply combination product with preemergence weed control.
August 20 to August 31	Fertilize with 1.0 lb. of actual nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. Slow release fertilizer carriers are preferred.
October 15 to November 15	Fertilize with 1.0 lb. of actual nitrogen per 1,000 sq. ft. Slow release fertilizers are preferred.

WATERING

April to November	Water to prevent wilting and drought. Tall fescue is drought tolerant and can be grown in most years without irrigation.
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HERBICIDES

April 20 to May 10	Apply preemergence herbicide for crabgrass, goosegrass and foxtail control, if necessary.
May 1 to May 20	Control dandelion and other broadleaf weeds if they are a serious problem. Fall is preferred time for control.
September 20 to October 31	Apply perennial broadleaf weed control if necessary. This is the preferred time for controlling dandelions and clover.

INSECT CONTROL

June 15 to June 30	<i>Insects are seldom a problem in tall fescue lawns.</i> Sod webworm and white grubs are occasional problems. Check for sod webworm larvae and control if necessary.
August 1, to September 30	Check for white grubs and control if necessary (see NebGuide <i>G92-1085, White Grubs in Turf</i>).

DISEASE CONTROL

April 1, to June 15	Diseases are seldom a problem. Leafspot susceptibility is often related to early spring fertilization (i.e. March and April) with quick release fertilizer carriers.
June 1 to August 15	Susceptibility to brown patch is often related to heavy shade or overfertilization with nitrogen (see NebGuide <i>G84-688, Brown Patch Disease of Turfgrass</i>).
August 15 to October 15	Leaf and stem rust may be a problem on susceptible cultivars (see NebGuide <i>G92-1119, Rust Diseases of Turfgrass</i>).

THATCH REMOVAL

Thatch is rarely a problem on tall fescue lawns.

AERIFICATION

April 1 to April 30 and/or September 5 to September 30	Tall fescues are very tolerant to wear, but are susceptible to compaction stress. Aerify lawns that are on clay soil or subject to heavy traffic to minimize compaction and improve rooting.
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OVERSEEDING

April 15 to June 15 and/or August 20 to September 20	Overseed tall fescue lawns that have been thinned by winter injury. Use a blend of improved turf-type tall fescue cultivars, and seed at 4 to 6 lbs/1,000 sq. ft. When seeding, use a starter-fertilizer applied at 1.0 lb. N/1,000 sq. ft. Spring overseeding can be accompanied with an application of siduron to prevent crabgrass competition (see current NebFact for cultivars recommended for Nebraska).
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