

Armyworms & Weeds: Turf Nemesis

It's been a long, hot summer here in north Mississippi and your turf is probably showing the wear of the season. You've watered on a regular basis and kept the grass alive, but you still have a few weeds that refuse to leave. With one more push, you can finally be rid of these pesky weeds and get that front yard clean again, maybe.

Killing Summer Weeds

The first thing you need to do is identify what type of grass you have. Not all grasses can be treated with the same product. The second job is to identify the weeds in your lawn. Once you have done this, you can begin to work on the problem. A labeled post-emergent weed-killer will remove unsightly weeds now and should keep the lawn clean for the rest of this year. You need to be absolutely sure what you are applying is labeled for your turf type. The wrong chemical can wipe out the weeds, right along with the turf.

Stopping Winter Weeds

You should also consider treating your turf with a Winterizer and Weed Preventer (Pre-emergent). The winterizer is a root building fertilizer that helps sustain the turf through the dormant period by providing phosphorus and potassium, but no Nitrogen. The weed-preventer helps to keep the annual winter weeds from germinating. You know, the wild garlic and the purple henbit that appear as if from nowhere in late January. This product needs to be applied before soil temperatures begin to drop, so try and get it out before September 10th.

Turf Pests

One last pest to be on the lookout for is the Fall Armyworm. These creatures are army green in color and have an inverted Y on the top of their head. They feed day or night and can quickly destroy a small lawn. I have had numerous calls in the last few weeks about them. They can be treated using carbaryl (Sevin), acephate (Orthene) or other labeled products. Don't delay if you find them in your turf.

Almost Through

The good news is that we only mow our lawns an average of 4 times after September 1st. This means that outdoor chore is almost over for another year. Remember to leave the turf a little taller for added winter protection.

Keep these tips in mind to help protect and prepare your turf for the coming years. If you have any questions, please contact your local county Extension office at (662) 328-2111 or visit our website at <http://msucares.com>.

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