

I understand that fall is the best time to reseed with fescue. However, I am not sure how to do it and what type of seeds to buy.

Can you help me? Robert T., Broken Arrow Fescue is called a "cool season" turf grass for a reason. It does not tolerate hot weather well at all.

We have just had a big dose of heat, and there are many brown patches in Tulsa's fescue lawns that need reseeding. The good news is that it is about time to do so. The ideal time for sowing cool-grass lawn seed is from mid-September to mid-October. It is also generally recommended that a soil test be performed before reseeding to determine what nutrient amendments might be needed. Therefore, right now would be a perfect time to do this because there is time to get your soil test results back before time to reseed. If weeds and/or Bermuda grass are present, spray the planting area with a glyphosate product. Two spray applications will be needed to fully eradicate Bermuda grass. One week later, the dead weeds and grass can then be raked and removed. If the soil is compacted, it will need to be tilled (either by machine or by hand) to be receptive to the seed. A starter fertilizer, along with any amendments you might wish to use (e.g., organic compost), should be added at the time of tilling. Read the label directions to sow the proper amount of seed to get good coverage, but avoid excess seeding. More is not better. After sowing, the top of the soil needs to be kept constantly moist (not wet) until seedlings are 2 inches tall. Then, change to less frequent and deeper watering to encourage deep roots. While there are no guarantees, this will help to improve the sustainability of fescue through the hot summer months. The grass should be mowed with a sharp-bladed mower after reaching a height of 3 inches. Another application of a nitrogen fertilizer should be made in November. One of the common issues in reseeding cool-grass lawns is deciding what type of grass seed should be used. Unfortunately, there is not one that is

bulletproof, and no one single fescue variety stands out as the best overall. Each fescue variety, individually, has its own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, it is recommended that a mixture (two or more species) of fescue, Kentucky bluegrass and perennial rye grass be used to cope with various diseases. Another appropriate choice is to use one of several mixtures of tall fescue without the other turf grass seeds. Any of these mixtures will perform well and will be better than a single type of fescue alone. One thing is clear – we live in a difficult area to grow cool-season grasses. Detailed instructions for lawn seeding are available in OSU Fact Sheet HLA-6419, “Establishing a Lawn in Oklahoma.”

• For answers to all your gardening questions, call the Tulsa Master Gardeners Help Line at 918-746-3701, drop by our Diagnostic Center at 4116 E. 15th St., or email mg@tulsamastergardeners.org

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