

Clover Maintenance Tips

Watering

Once established, watering once a week or less should be sufficient.

Mowing

Once established, mow at desired height or do not mow and let it grow. It will only get about 6-8" tall. To encourage flowering and local adaptation, stop mowing for 4-6 weeks in mid-summer.

Fertilizing

Do not use a nitrogen fertilizer. It will have negative effects since clover is a nitrogen-fixing legume. Clover essentially creates its own nitrogen and even fertilizes nearby plants. You may add phosphorus and potassium to bring levels to a medium rating. A soil test will determine fertility.



Contact us.

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Canada's Tournament Capital

Clover - Friend or Foe?



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City of Kamloops White Clover - Friend or Foe?

Reasons Why Traditional Lawns are Becoming Less Desirable

- In our semi-arid climate, rainfall is not enough to keep grass green and the cost of watering grass can be an issue.
- Many people do not have the time or energy to maintain a lawn that needs to be cut and watered frequently.
- There are environmental concerns surrounding herbicides/pesticides, chemical fertilizers, and lawn mower emissions.

Advantages of White Clover

- Stays green all summer with less water than grass.
- Usually grows 5-15 cm (2-6") tall and requires little mowing.
- Grows well in poor soil.

Did you know?

Before herbicides came into common use in the 1950s, white clover was considered a standard of excellence in lawn care and was a desired component of lawn seed mixes. Good quality grass seed had a high percentage of white clover (aka Dutch clover or Dutch white clover).

- Aerates the soil on its own.
- Never needs a nitrogen application since it creates its own fertilizer.
- Never needs herbicides. In fact, most herbicides kill clover.
- Out competes most weeds.
- Attracts beneficial insects that feed on aphids, scales, whiteflies, and other pests in the garden.
- Immune to "dog spots".
- Soft to walk on.
- Is inexpensive.

Disadvantages of White Clover

- Stains clothing more easily than grass.
- Not durable enough for high traffic areas (unless mixed with grass).
- May require reseeding.
- Attracts bees (pro and con). Bees can be an issue for those with allergies, but they can be discouraged by mowing the flowers off during the blooming season.
- Does not thrive in shady conditions.

Why not try an experimental clover lawn in a small area and see how much time, energy, and water you save?

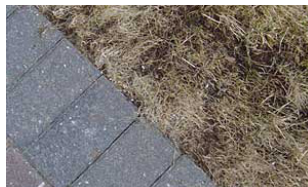
Starting a Clover Lawn

There are pure clover lawns and mixed-grass clover lawns. For play areas and other higher traffic locations, mixed lawns are best. For low to moderate traffic areas, clover only may do fine. Pure clover lawns may take more effort to establish. Clover and grass are complementary and support one another.

Springtime is best for seeding; however, it can also be seeded in fall. There are two starting points - bare ground and existing lawn.

To mix clover in with an existing lawn:

1. Grass should be cut short and bagged
2. Rake up extra debris and clippings.



Before (salt damage)



After

3. Seeding recommendations are 60-245 g/100 m². For clover to be dominant, use 245 g per 100 m² (8 oz per 1,000 sq. ft.) 454 g of seed contains approximately 800,000 seeds.
4. Since the seed is so small and difficult to sow evenly, it is suggested that it be mixed with soil, sawdust, or graded sand (grain size approximately 1 mm) for distribution in a broadcast spreader. Do NOT cover seed with a layer more than 0.6cm (¼") deep.
5. If there is no clover present in the lawn or nearby, you may need to add a bacterial inoculant to promote the best growth. It can be mixed with the seed.
6. Water daily for about ten days. At temperatures above 15°C, most seed will germinate in less than a week.
7. Until established mow regularly at 3.75-5 cm (1.5-2").

For bare soil:

1. Rake the ground relatively flat.
2. Use about 230 g per 100 m² (8 oz./1,000 sq. ft.) if sowing only clover. 1 lb of seed contains about 800,000 seeds. If seeding a mix of grass and clover, use approximately one part clover to 15 parts of appropriate grass seed. Usually it is best to sow clover seed separately as it settles out and results in patchy areas.
3. Since the seed is so small and difficult to sow evenly, it is suggested that it be mixed with soil, sawdust, or graded sand (grain size approximately 1 mm) for distribution in a broadcast spreader. Do NOT cover seed with a layer more than 0.6 cm (¼") deep.
4. If there is no clover in the vicinity, you may need to add a bacterial inoculant to promote the best growth. It can be mixed with the seed.
5. Water daily for about ten days. At temperatures above 15°C, most seed will germinate in less than a week.