

- Diversify an established lawn by spreading a mix of grasses and even some white clover seed over a thin layer of good soil or compost on the grass.
- If starting a new lawn from scratch, plant it on at least six inches of topsoil.
- Reduce the need for watering by allowing some dappled shade and increasing organic matter in the soil.
- By adding flowers, bushes and trees, you attract birds and insects that will control lawn pests such as chinch bugs, that:
 - ◆ Thrive in dry, sunny, grass-only lawns.
 - ◆ Love grass that is high in nitrogen. Therefore, fertilize with compost so nutrients, such as nitrogen, are provided gradually.
- If you have a chinch bug problem on a small patch or two of lawn, place an old damp sheet or newspaper over the area and dispose of the bugs that cling to it.

COMPOST!

Let Nature Recycle One Third of Your Waste Into Free Fertilizer:

- Find a discreet but convenient and accessible location in the backyard that is partially sunny and has good drainage.
- Buy or build a compost bin.
 - ◆ Boards, bricks, cement blocks or an old barrel can be used.
 - ◆ Make sure there are spaces or holes in the sides for good aeration.
 - ◆ Place the bottomless bin on soil that has been turned.
 - ◆ Alternately layer green waste (kitchen waste and garden refuse) and brown waste (leaves, dry grass clippings and old potting soil).
 - ◆ Add a layer of soil or compost to get things started.

Troubleshoot:

- Keep the compost damp as in a sponge that has been wrung out.
- Turn once a week.
- Shred or break up material to make it decompose faster.
- If the pile starts to smell foul, mix in some straw or dead leaves and add a thin layer of soil.
- Cover your compost to keep animals out.
- **Never** add animal waste or meat.
- **Do not** add dryer lint or vacuum dust.
- For more information, go to: www.gnb.ca or www.fredericton.ca (search *composting*).

IF YOU HIRE A LAND-CARE PROFESSIONAL:

- Choose one certified by Plant Health Atlantic. This will ensure that they know how to cultivate healthy soil and plants.
- State clearly that you want **NO** chemical fertilizers or pesticides used on your lawn and/or garden.
- If they are not certified, ask them to use the cultural methods described in this brochure.

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LAWN & BEYOND

Gardening for health by nurturing nature.



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WHY NURTURE NATURE?

Whether you do it yourself or hire a land-care professional, you can use the green space around your home to improve air quality, reduce climate change, conserve and protect water supplies and increase biodiversity! Bonus: A diverse garden will promote the physical and mental well-being of your family and increase the curb appeal of your home. If you add a vegetable garden as well, you can be more self-sufficient and save money.

Improve Air Quality:

- Plant trees and bushes to increase absorption of pollutants and output of oxygen.
- Go pesticide-free by working with nature.

Help Reduce Climate Changing Gasses:

- Reduce energy consumption.
 - ◆ Plant deciduous trees to shade your house in the summer and let the sun in through the winter.
 - ◆ Plant conifers on the north side of the house to block cold winds.
- Plant diverse species of bushes, trees and perennials that will increase the leaf area and time to absorb CO₂.

Increase the Biodiversity of Your Green Space:

Healthy biodiversity is essential to the future health and survival of humans.

- Plant diverse grasses, perennials, fruit bushes and trees, especially native ones, as they:
 - ◆ Are adapted to our climate.
 - ◆ Help conserve water.
 - ◆ Attract birds and beneficial insects that will keep pests at bay.
 - ◆ Attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies, whose populations are threatened worldwide, and which are necessary to produce a third of our food supply.

Conserve and Protect Water Supplies:

- Avoid using pesticides and chemical fertilizers.
- Grow plants appropriate to moisture conditions.
- Use a rain barrel to catch rain off your roof.
- Add composted organic matter to your soil to hold moisture.
- Use mulch, such as cedar bark chips or pea gravel, on your perennial beds to conserve soil moisture and reduce the need to weed.
- If you *must* water, do so in the early morning, to the depth of a tuna fish tin (1 inch) about every four days.
 - ◆ By watering less frequently you can promote longer plant roots.

Become More Self-Sufficient:

- Plant a small area of vegetables.



TO GO PESTICIDE AND CHEMICAL FERTILIZER FREE:

First, Improve Your Soil:

- Test the pH of your soil with a kit from your local garden centre.
- Apply lime if soil is acidic.
 - ◆ This will make nutrients in soil more available to plants and will prevent weeds.
- Spread compost to add organic matter to the soil.
 - ◆ It helps soil retain moisture.
 - ◆ It makes soil more crumbly.
 - ◆ It promotes earthworms that provide natural aeration of soil.
 - ◆ It promotes helpful microorganisms that break down grass clippings, etc.
- Leave grass clippings on your lawn to fertilize soil and increase organic matter.

Next, Diversify, Diversify, Diversify:

- Think about how much lawn you need for recreation.
 - ◆ Consider replacing some of your lawn with other plants to achieve a thriving, diverse garden.
- Increase biodiversity by planting a variety of deciduous and conifer trees, fruit bushes and small perennials.
 - ◆ Visit your local garden centre or plant nursery for great advice on what to plant where.
- Choose native species: Go to: www.wildaboutgardening.org or www.evergreen.ca, click on *Home Grounds*, then *Native Plant Database*.

EIGHT ATTRACTIVE WILDLIFE BUSHES/SMALL TREES ARE:

➤ rugosa rose	➤ American mountain ash
➤ elderberry	➤ red-osier dogwood
➤ chokecherry	➤ honeysuckle
➤ hawthorn	➤ serviceberry

TO CULTIVATE A HEALTHY LAWN:

- Re-think what you consider a weed.
- Crowd out weeds, shade soil and reduce watering by mowing to 6.5 – 7.5 cm (2.5 – 3 inches).
- Remove noxious weeds by hand, a metre at a time, when the ground is soft in the spring or after a good rain.
 - ◆ Use an inexpensive hand tool or an old kitchen knife to remove as much of the root as possible.
 - ◆ Top seed bare patches that are left when weeds are removed.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn.
- Promote healthy, less acidic soil.