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Fall lawn management practices of fertilization, overseeding, aeration and irrigation will be important for repairing heat and drought damaged turf areas this year.

A hot, dry summer has led to an increased need for seeding/overseeding. Mid-August to mid-September is ideal time to seed cool season turfgrass. Correct seed-bed preparation is critical for successful establishment.

Refer to the UNL Turf Info articles on Improving Turf in the Fall http://turf.unl.edu/pdfcaextpub/LawnImprovementPrograms2010A.pdf and Establishing Lawns From Seed http://turf.unl.edu/pdfcaextpub/Establishingturffromseed2012l.pdf

Green up needed for herbicide applications

Do not apply herbicides to dormant turf or weeds. If renovating a lawn and glyphosate (Round Up) or other herbicides will be used to kill older turfgrass and/or weeds prior to seeding, the turfgrass and weeds need to be green and actively growing, not dormant from drought, for herbicides to be effective.

Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 is the most effective time to apply post emergence herbicides to control broadleaf weeds. Effectiveness is increased if weeds are actively growing at the time of application.

Refer to Landscape Weed Management, EC1256, http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/ec1256.pdf for additional information.

Fall fertilizations key applications for cool season turfgrasses

If a lawn has gone dormant wait until it comes out of dormancy, either with rainfall or irrigation, to fertilize. Still a few days away as mid-September is ideal timing for initial fall application.

Winter annual weed control on lawns with a history of these weeds should begin now. Use recommended fall management practices to increase turf density for increased competition with weeds.

Henbit and Speedwell are two common winter annuals. They are the small, purple and blue flowering weeds that bloomed early in the spring. As winter annuals, most of the seed for next years' plants will germinate this fall. Overwintering plants then bloom again in early spring, produce seed and die during hot weather.

If weed pressure was high this past spring/early summer, apply a preemergence herbicide labeled for winter annuals in early September. Mid October applications of typical postemergence products will control vast majority of winter annual broadleaf weeds.