

## **Lawn Care Tips**

*Courtesy of Woerner Landscape:*

The most successful turf grasses for our area are Classic St. Augustine, Centipede, and now, our newest grass, UltimaFlora Zoysia. For most of our customers who want a new yard, we suggest Zoysia grass. NewLand Landscape Solutions uses the cultivar of Zoysia known as UltimateFlora. This grass was developed for our area. It's the most resistant grass to drought, salt water, pesticides, weeds, and insects. Additionally, it is cold-tolerant, a characteristic that is important in northwest Florida.

For customers with an existing St. Augustine or Centipede lawn, with the lawn just needing patch replacement, we can certainly match the existing sod in your yard.

Let's look at these sods and learn some important aspects of each one. Although there are different cultivars of turf sod, we will address the ones we feel are best suited for lawns in our area.

### **UltimateFlora Zoysia**

UltimateFlora Zoysia – is a cultivar of Zoysia was developed specifically for our area by the University of Florida. UltimateFlora Zoysia has a dense and delicate texture that feels great on bare feet! It's a beautiful grass with great color and texture. This Zoysia is resistant to weeds, drought, salt water, insects, and pesticides. Additionally, it is cold-tolerant.

### **Watering**

Newly planted UltimateFlora Zoysia should be watered daily and soaked thoroughly to a depth of three (3) inches for the first two weeks to avoid dry out.

After the first two weeks, water daily, but at a lesser amount than the first two weeks. Maintain the lighter, daily watering for two more weeks. After that time, the lawn is better established and watering should then mimic the environment – water heavily every few days rather than watering lightly daily.

Basically, sandy soils need less water, but need to be watered more frequently (every 2 – 3 days). Heavier soils, like clay, need more water, but need to be watered less frequently (every 3 – 4 days).

Your UltimateFlora Zoysia will let you know if it needs more water. If blades begin to curl and lose color, more frequent irrigation is required.

### **Mowing**

An established Ultimate FloraZoysia lawn should be mowed every week during the mowing season.

The optimum mowing height is 1.5" – 3" with rotary mower and ¾" – 1.5" with reel mower.

Remove clippings from the lawn to avoid thatch build-up. Thatch build-up is the most serious issue with an Ultimate FloraZoysia lawn, but frequent mowing with clipping removal will help prevent thatch accumulation.

## **Maintenance program**

NewLand Landscape Solutions recommends a routine soil test analysis to help you determine the best fertilizer needs for your lawn.

An established UltimateFlora Zoysia lawn should be fertilized with 0.4 to 0.8 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per growing month. A slow-release organic fertilizer works best.

January/February	5-0-15 with Invigorate and Surflan Pre-emergant
March/April	15-0-15 with Invigorate and Atrazine
May/June	Bifin – Pro Insecticide
July/August	GCO Organic Fertility/GCO Humic Acid
September/October	5-0-15 with Invigorate and Surflan Pre-emergant
November/December	Pelletized Lime

## **Miscellaneous info**

Color – medium to dark green

Texture – medium blade with dense foliage

Soils – tolerates a wide range of soil types, but is best suited to well-drained, fertile soils

pH tolerance – 6.5 – 7.5 is ideal

Wear tolerance – good recuperative qualities and is fairly wear resistant

## **Classic St. Augustine**

Classic St. Augustine – the Classic cultivar of St. Augustine grass is the best variety of all the grasses of the St. Augustine family. This grass performs well in the shade and has the best disease and insect resistance and is the most cold resistant of all St. Augustine varieties.

## **Watering**

Newly planted Classic St. Augustine should be watered daily and soaked thoroughly to a depth of three (3) inches for the first two weeks to avoid dry out.

After the first two weeks, water daily, but at a lesser amount than the first two weeks. Maintain the lighter, daily watering for two more weeks. After that time, the lawn is better established and watering needs will vary based on the type of soil present. It's always best to mimic the environment and water heavily every few days rather than watering lightly daily. Basically, sandy soils need less water, but need to be watered more frequently (every 2 – 3 days). Heavier soils, like clay, need more water, but need to be watered less frequently (every 3 – 4 days).

## **Mowing**

An established Classic St. Augustine lawn should be mowed every week during the mowing season.

The optimum mowing height for Classic St. Augustine is 2" – 4". Mow with a sharp rotary mower or reel mower. Allow clippings to remain on the lawn. Never remove more than 1/3 of the shoot growth at one mowing. Classic St. Augustine has minimal thatch build-up and therefore seldom requires dethatching.

## **Maintenance program**

NewLand Landscape Solutions recommends a routine soil test analysis to help you determine the best fertilizer needs for your lawn.

An established Classic St. Augustine lawn should be fertilized with 0.4 to 0.8 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet per growing month. A slow-release organic fertilizer works best.

January/February	5-0-15 with Invigorate and Surflan Pre-emergant
March/April	5-0-15 with Invigorate and Atrazine
May/June	Bifin – Pro Insecticide
July/August	GCO Organic Fertility/GCO Humic Acid
September/October	5-0-15 with Invigorate and Surflan Pre-emergant
November/December	Pelletized Lime

## **Miscellaneous info**

Color – medium to dark green

Texture – wide blade with dense foliage

Soils – tolerates a wide range of soil types, but is best suited to well-drained, fertile soils

pH tolerance – 6.5 – 7.5 is ideal, but can tolerate a pH from 5.8 – 8.5

Wear tolerance – good recuperative qualities and is fairly wear resistant

## **Centipede**

Centipede– is a popular grass along the Gulf Coast. It's very durable and is fairly low maintenance compared to other grasses. Centipede does not tolerate the cold and that can be problematic in our area.

## **Watering**

Newly planted Centipede should be watered daily and soaked thoroughly to a depth of three (3) inches for the first two weeks to avoid dry out.

After the first two weeks, reduce watering to every other day until the lawn is established. Once the lawn is established, watering needs will vary based on soil type. It's always best to mimic the environment and water heavily every few days rather than watering lightly daily. Basically, sandy soils need less water, but need to be watered more frequently (every 2 – 3 days). Heavier soils, like clay, need more water, but need to be watered less frequently (every 3 – 4 days).

## **Mowing**

An established Centipede lawn should be mowed every week to 10 days during the mowing season.

The optimum mowing height is 1" – 2" with a sharp rotary mower or reel mower. Allow clippings to remain on the lawn. Never remove more than 1/3 of the shoot growth at one mowing. Centipede has minimal thatch build-up and therefore seldom requires dethatching.

## **Maintenance program**

NewLand Landscape Solutions recommends a routine soil test analysis to help you determine the best fertilizer needs for your lawn.

An established Centipede lawn should be fertilized with little or no nitrogen.

January/February	watch for brown patch
March/April	15-0-15 with Invigorate and Atrazine
May/June	Bifin – Pro and Insecticide
July/August	Organic Fertility/ Humic Acid
September/October	5-0-15 with Invigorate and Surflan Pre-emergant
November/December	Pelletized Lime

## **Miscellaneous info**

Color – medium green

Texture – moderately coarse blade structure

Soils – tolerates a wide range of soil types, but is best suited to well-drained, fertile soils

pH tolerance – 5 – 6 is ideal, but can tolerate a pH up to 7

Wear tolerance – good recuperative qualities and is fairly wear resistant

Shade tolerance – Centipede has little shade tolerance

## **MAY, North Florida Gardening Calendar**

*Courtesy of University of Florida, IFAS Extension*

Annuals: plants that can take summer heat include salvia, angelonia, wax begonia, and ornamental pepper. Bulbs: planting early-, mid-, and late-blooming varieties of daylily ensures months of color from these low maintenance plants.

Herbs: Continue to plant heat loving herbs, including basil, oregano, sage, Mexican tarragon, and rosemary.

Vegetables: Southern favorites to plant now are okra, southern pea, and sweet potato.

Pests: Harmful insects become more active as the weather warms. Watch for thrips, scale, and mites on ornamental plants.

Gardenias: While some yellowing of older leaves is normal, yellowing of new growth usually indicates a micronutrient deficiency.

Oleanders: Chewed or ragged leaves indicate oleander caterpillars at work.

Lawn insects: Watch for damage from chinch bugs in St. Augustine and begin scouting for newly hatched mole crickets in Bahia lawns.

Tomatoes: Watch for pests, disease, and nutritional disorders on tomato plants.

Lawn nutrition: If not done last month, apply a fertilizer (not a weed & feed) without phosphorus unless soil test indicates the need for it. A fertilizer containing controlled-release nitrogen will give longer lasting results.

Propagation: Now is a good time to produce more plants by air layering, grafting, division, or cuttings.

Trees: Prepare for hurricane season by checking trees for damaged or weak branches and prune if needed. Hire an ISA certified arborist.

Prevent lawn pests: Discourage insects, weeds, and disease by mowing correctly.

### **What to Do Every Month**

Adjust irrigation based on rainfall.

Deadhead flowers to encourage new blooms.

Monitor the garden for insects and disease.

Plant trees, shrubs, and perennials and water until established.

Mow lawns at recommended heights.