

You cannot afford to miss this window

We are in the dog days of summer meaning your turf and plants have been growing for over 4 months. While gardeners are motivated to fertilize their landscape in the spring, many miss their August feeding.

Remember, you are dealing with living organisms that need nutrition. Just because you have it looking good now, doesn't mean it's time to leave it be until next spring. Missing your August feeding can set your plants and turf up for disappointment and stress on many levels, even following into the next year's growing season.

Most fast release granular fertilizers last only 30-90 days depending on quality of product. This means if using a fast release, what you put out this spring is, or has been gone for a while. Making a midsummer application is critical. To help you master your southern landscapes nutrition needs, following are 4 important reasons to feed in August you need to be aware of.



1. Performance:

Even if plant or turf looks lush and healthy now, that is no reason to starve them the rest of the growing season. There is a delay from the time you put granular fertilizer out and when it's available to the roots of whatever you are feeding. Therefore, even if plants or turf looks healthy,

keep the momentum with another feeding before it shows signs of malnutrition. Most plants and turf will have an aggressive, late summer flush towards the end of August and through September. Feeding now helps for a strong second half and ending to the growing season.

2. Roots:

Healthy roots are critical, it will determine how well plants or turf hold up through times of drought, how durable they are in extreme heat or cold, how well they absorb nutrients, and how well trees and shrubs hold up to high winds. Healthy roots will even help your turf handle wear and tear from heavy foot traffic and the mower. Also, roots are where plants and turf store all its energy to break dormancy the following spring. Unhealthy roots in the fall can lead to higher risk of winter damage due to severe winter temperatures and a poor spring flush. Yes, how you feed them now can directly affect how well plants or turf overwinter and their spring flush the following year.

3. Disease and Pest resistance:

Just like any living organism, plants and turf must have proper nutrients to have a healthy immune system. Proper fertilization can dramatically reduce fungal issues and even naturally suppress some types of bug infestations. Healthy plants are always the best defense before the use of fungicides and insecticides.

4. Last chance this growing season:

If you see obvious signs of malnutrition, August really is your last month this growing season to make a proper correction. Feeding too late in the year (September-October) can result in more damage than good. This is because you don't want your plants and turf to still be growing vigorously from too much nitrogen in soil when temperatures start dramatically dropping in the fall. This can result in winter damage due to stems not hardening off well and nitrogen burn from too much nitrogen on the roots when not absorbing it.

