

What's New with Pure Prairie



Pure Prairie Organics

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Greetings Gardeners!

This is the second application for this year and we used; gypsum, alfalfa, meat and bone meal (pork), molasses, yeast and ammonia sulfate. The gypsum and alfalfa will help us with disease control that comes in the hot weather. The rains sure helped out in the month of May and now it seems we have some balance of rain and heat.

A note about watering; I don't require you to water the lawn over the summer as many homeowners do. With the high heat, it's hard to keep up with the lawn as it needs a lot of water. The university says if we go 21 days between rains then the grass will begin to die and we will need to reseed a part of the lawn. My recommendation is to water once or twice per month just to hold the lawn at dormant so it won't die. We DO need the water in the last half of September and also in October because the plants are getting ready for winter and they are storing their food in the roots and they need water to make their food. So this summer, put away the sprinkler and go to the beach with your family and we will bring out the watering hoses after the children go back to school. It is all temperature related and you will see that with the cooler temps in September and a little water, the lawn will pop back and look just like it did in spring.

I am a big fan of mulching and I recommend pine, hardwood or the free chips from the local tree guys. Please do not use cedar or cypress as it won't break down and add fiber to the soil. Mulching 2-3" cuts back dramatically on watering and weeding our beds. Weed seeds need sunlight to germinate and mulching does a great job of shading the soil.

Also everyone should be mowing high. Longer grass = longer roots. The longer grass will shade the soil and we can get 40% weed control just from mowing high. Also mowing high will cut our watering in half. Most of us have an ideal amount of thatch; half inch or less. We need

some thatch to shade the soil and help hold the moisture in as well as giving some weed control. The evaporation rate here is extremely high and when the sun hits the soil that moisture is gone in minutes! The best time to water is in the evening so it has time to percolate into the soil. Many books recommend we water in the morning but we all know it will be gone by noon if we do that! In this climate, definitely water in the evening.

The gypsum that I use has calcium and is a great plant food but it is also a terrific soil conditioner. Many of you are seeing lots of earthworms in the rains and these worms are tunneling about 10' per week and there is no better aeration than that and they are doing it for free. The bacteria and lots of mushrooms that you are seeing are also aerating the soil and decomposing organic matter. Ants are usually eating some old roots or tree trunk and are active for about a three week period. Just leave them alone and they will go away on their own. If they get into the house then use rubbing alcohol to kill the ants and a light bleach solution to erase their trail and they will go away by themselves. Diatomaceous earth will also work and I have plenty if you need some. Also, ants will not cross a chalk line. It disorients their chemical communication system. Kids! Gimme that driveway chalk! We got ants to battle over here! He. The mental picture of fighting our children for the chalk or giving them permission to draw on the house is really funny!

It may be a little late but let me know if you need any potting soil. I have some killer stuff. Well, not literally, but you know what I mean!
A 25 pound bag is \$5.

That's all I can think of for now. As always give me a call if you have a question.
Bill

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