Going Organic
A Homeowner's Checklist

Soil Health

- ☐ Test your soil to identify its pH and fertility levels
- ☐ Make your own compost by mixing food and yard waste
- ☐ Choose natural mulches which mimic nature's ground cover

Pest Management

- ☐ Increase biodiversity
- ☐ Focus on prevention of pests
- ☐ Identify and remove invasive plants
- ☐ Use organic pesticides if necessary

Lawn Care

- ☐ Add white clover, trefoil, or native grasses for drought tolerance
- ☐ Reduce the area of your lawn
- ☐ Set your mower to 3 to 4 inches and leave grass clippings on the lawn

Planting

- ☐ Preserve or add native plants
- ☐ Observe the natural landscape and apply nature's lessons
- ☐ Grow more vegetables and less grass: convert some of your lawn into an organic garden

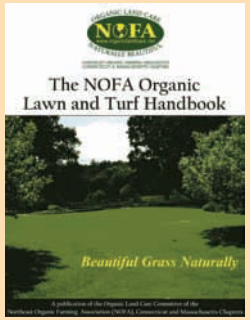
Water Conservation

- ☐ Water infrequently and never more than 1" per week including rainfall
- ☐ Turn off automatic sprinklers
- ☐ Divert roof runoff to low-lying areas or rain barrels
- ☐ Plant buffers between yards and watercourses or wetlands to reduce runoff

Additional Resources

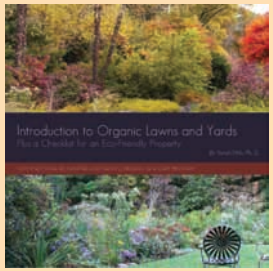
To purchase these books, go to our website at

organiclandcare.net



The NOFA Organic Lawn and Turf Handbook

NOFA Standards for Organic Land Care



Introduction to Organic Lawns and Yards

Annual NOFA Guide to Organic Land Care

Looking for a professional?
Go to organiclandcare.net/aolcp-search to locate an Accredited Organic Land Care Professional (AOLCP) in your area.

Looking for education?
Take NOFA's 5-Day Accreditation Course in Organic Land Care, available in Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts.

Looking for homeowner and consumer information?
Subscribe to CT NOFA's newsletters to learn more about organic food, agriculture and events in Connecticut by visiting

ctnofa.org

or call 203.888.5146

ORGANIC LAND CARE
NOFA
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NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL

Organic Yards and Lawns


Photo Credit: R. Darke

Information and resources you need to cultivate a healthy, sustainable yard using natural processes and leaving out harmful chemicals.

Your yard is part of the environment

Managing your yard as an ecosystem produces a healthy, balanced, and attractive outdoor space with less effort, cost, and maintenence.

Biodiversity, ecological cycles, and soil life support healthy plants, animals, and people.

Do yourself a favor

Cut the chemicals - pesticides harm more than pests. Many pesticides are carcinogens and exposure can affect child development. Wild animals and pets may also be harmed.

Cut costs on repeated chemical applications, gasoline, and sprinkler systems. Use the free landscaping services offered by soil organisms, pollinators, compost, plants, and beneficial insects.

Cut less often - an eco-yard is meant to sustain itself the same way a natural ecosystem does; this means less cutting.

Make your yard a force of nature

Promote biodiversity and choose native plants to support a self-sustaining yard that is resistent to pests.

Use natural fertilizers such as leaves and compost to add nutrients to your soil instead of synthetic fertilizers which disrupt soil biology and can pollute water.

Conserve water by using plants adapted to local rainfall patterns and by incorporating compost and mulch to retain water in the soil.

Encourage beneficial insects to naturally control pests as a form of organic integrated pest management (IPM).

What if prevention is not enough?

For persistent pests, you can try organic pesticides - a non-synthetic, OMRI approved (omri.org) alternative used conservatively and only when other IPM methods have failed.

The best way to manage weeds is to remove them using species-specific practices such as hand pulling, pruning, or animal grazing.

Plant Local Think Global

Using compost and vegetation to retain excess water eliminates chemical runoff that harms watercourses, drinking water, and marine habitat.

Natural, on-site materials require little or no fossil fuel in production while it is the main ingredient in synthetic fertilizer and the transport used to distribute these products.

Organic land care addresses three of the world's main environmental challenges: **climate change, loss of biodiversity, and excess nitrogen.**

Contact Us