

# W. P. LAW INCORPORATED

# CENTIPEDE GRASS

## FERTILIZER & WEED PREVENTION PROGRAM

### Centipede Traits

**Fertility:** LOW

**Drought Tolerance:** MEDIUM

**Shade Tolerance:** LOW

**Disease Problems:** PATCH DISEASES

**Insect Problems:** SPITTLEBUGS

**Recovery Rate:** POOR

**Density:** MEDIUM

**Texture:** MEDIUM

**Wear Tolerance:** POOR

### Centipede Grass

Centipede was first introduced into the U. S. in the early 1900s. Originally from **southern China**, centipede has adapted well to the state of South Carolina. Centipede is one of the few turf grasses, which **perform well on acidic and infertile soils**. Centipede grass has long been called the “**Lazy Man’s Grass**”. This is due to its slower growing habit and lower fertility requirement.

Many homeowners have complained of **delayed spring green-up or even dead spots within their lawns**. For the past four years, Clemson University has researched the effect of fertilization on centipede lawns. Although the research is ongoing, they have linked this phenomenon to **over fertilization**. Centipede grass grows best when **no more than 1 to 2 pounds of nitrogen per growing season is applied to the lawn**.

25-0-10 will provide 1 pound of slow release nitrogen along with potassium and iron. This combination of ingredients will help your lawn become more drought tolerant.

### Our Story

Since 1970, **W. P. Law, Inc.** has been the trusted source for irrigation components throughout South Carolina. We are proud to announce the newest line of products to **help keep your property looking its best**. Our **contractor grade** fertilizers and weed prevention products will ensure you get the professional results you desire.

The horticulture staff at W. P. Law, Inc. has assembled an **easy-to-follow schedule** with application rates to take the guess work out of proper fertilization and weed control.

Allow us to use our numerous years of experience to assist you in **saving time** while producing a **healthier landscape**.

In addition to fertilizers, **W.P. Law Inc.** offers a broad range of control products to keep landscapes looking their best. Our **insect control program** works great on fire ants and other lawn damaging insects. This newer generation broad-spectrum insecticide gives up to three months control and works on insects such as fire ants, spittlebugs, armyworms, cutworms, fleas, ticks, mole crickets, sand gnats, millipedes, and centipedes. Two applications per year will give season long control on most unwanted insects. Consult the W.P. Law Inc. Turfgrass Insect Management Guide for additional information on insects that cause damage to turf. A copy of the guide is available for download at [www.wplawinc.com/turfgrass](http://www.wplawinc.com/turfgrass)

**W.P. Law Inc.** also offers a complete line of **granular fungicides** to protect your turf against diseases that can cause severe injury. There are a variety of diseases that can cause injury to Centipede grass. In recent years, large patch (**brown patch**) has become the number one disease on warm-season turf. On the back is a fungicide program to help prevent large patch infestation. For additional information on other diseases that affect Centipede grass, **visit [www.wplawinc.com/turfgrass](http://www.wplawinc.com/turfgrass) to download a copy of the W.P. Law Inc. Turfgrass Disease Management Guide**



## Soils

A practical understanding of your soil is essential in managing your lawn. **Soil pH** is perhaps the most **crucial** element. Most turf grasses perform best when the soil pH falls between **6.3 and 7.0**. Centipede differs in that it performs best in the 5.7-6.5 range. If your soil pH does not fall within this range, essential nutrients will not be available to the grass. W.P. Law Inc. offers a complete **soil testing service**. Soil samples can be dropped off at any of our locations around the state.

**Verdelawn** is used to adjust soil pH. When applied at a rate of 12 pounds per 1,000 sq. ft., Verdelawn will raise the pH as much as one point in as little as **4-6 weeks**.

## Watering

The watering requirement for your Centipede lawn will **vary greatly** due to constantly changing weather conditions. During the growing season, it may need anywhere from **0-1.5" of water per week**. The professionals at W. P. Law, Inc. suggest using an **irrigation controller** with a weather station or soil moisture sensors to compensate for these changing conditions.

Studies have shown these types of controllers can save **20-50% on your water bill** over traditional time based controllers. Existing controllers can also be fitted with this water saving technology. In addition to saving water and money, there is no need for continual adjustment. The result is a **better looking lawn with less effort**. Because these "**smart controllers**" only apply water when needed, they will usually pay for themselves in water savings within the first year.

## Mowing

Centipede performs best when mowed **closely**. We suggest that your lawn be mowed as close to **1 1/2 to 2 inches** as possible. The height of cut should be easily obtained as long as the lawn is smooth. If there are severe irregularities in the grade, be careful not to scalp certain areas. **Scalping a lawn could cause damage to the crown of the plant**. In order for Centipede to look its best, it is recommended that your lawn be **mowed every 7-10 days**. This ensures that you avoid that "**white**" color of the lawn just after mowing. A good rule of thumb is to **NEVER remove more than 1/3 of the leaf blade during mowing**.

## Pre-Emergent Herbicides

Pre-emergent herbicides are used to prevent annual weeds from germinating in your lawn by forming a protective chemical barrier on the soil surface. There are both cool season and warm season annual weeds that germinate at various times throughout the year. By applying a pre-emergent herbicide, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

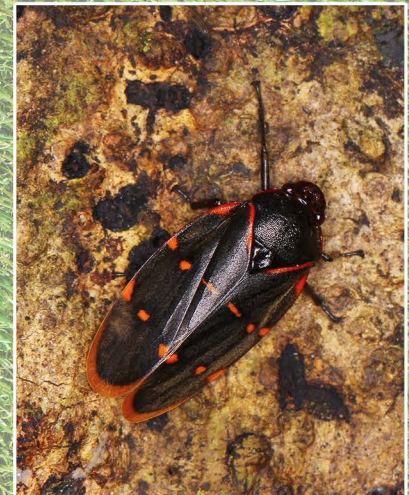
**NEVER apply these products on a lawn that is not well established!**

## Aeration

Aeration has two purposes. The first is to simply **loosen the soil**. The second is to **prune the roots**. Core aeration is the recommended method and should be performed every 2 years on a typical home lawn during the growing season. If your lawn receives heavy foot traffic, it is advisable to aerate every year. Aeration should be performed during the **growing season** of the turf.

## Spittlebug

There are several types of **spittlebugs** in South Carolina. The two-lined spittlebug causes the most damage on turf by **sucking out sap from the leaf blades with their needle like mouth parts**. Centipede grass seems to be the most affected, although these insects will feed on Bermuda, Zoysia, and St. Augustine. Spittlebug eggs over-winter in hollow stems of the grass and in plant debris on the soil. Eggs require high humidity for developing and **hatch in May and early June**. Twolined spittlebugs are easily identified by the **two orange lines across their backs**. There are usually **2-3 generations per year in South Carolina**. Young adults (nymphs) are also identified by spittle masses which protect it from drying and natural enemies. These masses look like spit and **very indicative of spittlebug infestations**. Most healthy stands of grass can tolerate certain levels of infestation. Regular mowing can help to reduce the population of these feeding insects. Mowing before insecticide applications can increase their effectiveness. Damage usually occurs from **June through September**. Grasses with high thatch and humidity levels favor spittlebug activity. Infestations result in **yellowing of grasses**.





## Management

Centipede is a low management grass that does not need many inputs. Common mistakes include over-fertilization and over-watering. Besides over fertilizing, many people make the mistake of applying fertilizers too early in the growing season.

Centipede will not start growing aggressively until the night time temperatures are consistently around 70 degrees. Applying nitrogen based fertilizers too early can make it more susceptible to late cold snaps. Fertilizers that contain a 1-0-1 ratio of nitrogen to potash work best on centipede, especially those grown on sandy soils. Centipede prefers well drained soils and will not tolerate “wet feet”. Over watering can lead to patch diseases which have become a major problem for this grass. Special attention should be paid to areas that receive runoff water from slopes, driveways, rooftops, etc. These areas can be more prone to having disease problems.

### Common Management Mistakes:

Over-Fertilization  
Over-Watering  
Early Season Nitrogen Applications  
Poor Drainage

## Brown Patch on Warm Season Turf

**Symptoms:** Large patch typically attacks grasses when they are in the **transition stage**. This occurs during the spring and fall months when grasses are going in and out of dormancy. **Large patch can be identified by large circular patches ranging from 2-20 feet in diameter.** Patches often have a yellow to light brown band around them. These patches can be perennial and occur in the same spot from year to year.

Large patch produces **soft, dark rot that occurs on the lower portion of leaf sheaths**. Rot at the basal portion of the leaf sheath causes shoots to easily detach from stolons. Distinct leaf lesions are usually not noticeable with large patch. This disease has quickly become the **number one disease on warm season turf in South Carolina**.

**Conditions favoring the disease:** Large patch occurs when daytime temperatures are in the **50° F to 85°F range**. Warm days with cool nights along with heavy dew favor disease development.

Large patch is more active in the **spring and fall** months and can be brought about by conditions of **high humidity and leaf wetness** of more than 10 hours for several consecutive days. Because this disease attacks grasses during their transition stage, **recovery is often slow**.

### Tips to Avoid Brown Patch

- Make initial nitrogen applications in **May** once grasses are fully out of dormancy.
- Do not make any nitrogen applications after **Aug. 15th**
- Avoid early season and late season nitrogen applications when the disease is active
- Avoid **over irrigating** grasses during Spring months
- Increase **height of cut** and increase **air circulation** if possible
- Minimize the amount of **shade** the grass receives
- Irrigate turf in the **early** part of the day
- Irrigate **deeply and infrequently**
- **Improve drainage**. Grasses such as Centipede and St. Augustine are stressed by excessive moisture
- **Reduce thatch**
- Apply **lime** if soil pH is less than **6.5**





# CENTIPEDE FERTILIZER AND WEED PREVENTION PROGRAM

**January:** Soil test and Verdelawn (if necessary)

Soil testing available through W. P. Law, Inc.

A soil test can determine the current fertility and health of your soil. By measuring both the pH level and pinpointing nutrient deficiencies, a soil test can provide the information to maintain the most optimal fertility each year.

**February-March:** 0-0-7 Barricade 0.38% or 0-0-7 Dimension 0.13%

(3# per 1000 sq. ft. or 3# per 1000 sq. ft.)

Pre-emergent for control of broadleaf and grassy weeds

**April:** 6-1-11 with 7% Iron

(5# per 1000 sq. ft.)

Provides grass with needed nutrients for Spring new growth

**May** 25-0-10 Fertilizer

(3# per 1000 sq. ft.)

Maintains steady growth with balanced slow release nutrients

**July:** 6-1-11 with 7% Iron

(5# per 1000 sq. ft.)

Produces green color without flushing top growth in late season

**September- October:** 0-0-7 Barricade 0.38% or Dimension 0.13%

(3# per 1000 sq. ft. or 6# per 1000 sq. ft.)

Prevents winter annual weeds such as annual and blue grass (poa annua)

**Sign up for our email reminder program to never miss a fertilizer application!**

[www.wplawinc.com/grass-fertilizer-program](http://www.wplawinc.com/grass-fertilizer-program)

## INSECT CONTROL PROGRAM

**April:** Bifenthrin Granular Insecticide

Broad spectrum insect control that lasts up to 3 months. Works great on fire ants.

(2.3#-4.6# per 1000 sq. ft.)

**July:** Bifenthrin Granular Insecticide

## LARGE PATCH FUNGICIDE PROGRAM

**April:** Pillar G Fungicide

Broad-spectrum fungicide with two active ingredients  
(3# per 1000 sq. ft.)

**September:** Pillar G Fungicide

**October:** Pillar G Fungicide

## DISCLAIMER:

This fertilizer and weed prevention program is an informal reference for herbicides and fertilizers available for turfgrass management. It is not meant to supplement any product labels. Herbicide and fertilizer **labels should always be consulted** before being applied. Labels are subject to change without notice. Due to differences in grass varieties, environmental conditions, temperature, stress, moisture conditions, plant health, and other factors, herbicide and fertilizer applications may cause undesirable injury to grasses.

**W.P. Law Inc. does not guarantee or warranty the use of products listed in this program. Please remember that the label is the law.**

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