

Lawn Removal



Susan Foley, Garden Sense Coordinator
Sonoma County Master Gardeners

Lawns in Sonoma County



1000 sq. ft. of lawn uses
on average **22,000 gallons**
of water per year



1000 sq. ft. water-wise
garden: **7,500 gallons**
of water per year
**= 1/3 of the water that
lawn requires!**

Considerations

- Size of the lawn • DIY vs Cost
- Time to Complete

Options

- Spray with Herbicide: Fast, \$\$\$, risk to environment
- Physically remove: Fast (with sod cutter), \$ if compost sod on site
- Solarization: Slow & unsightly, inexpensive, kills microbes, doesn't work



Photo courtesy of Daily Acts

Sheet Mulch

- Fast, inexpensive, builds soil fertility as lawn composts in place
- Can be done all at once or in stages
- Can plant immediately or wait until later

Sheet Mulching Steps



- 1) Buy/collect cardboard
- 2) Remove invasive plants
- 3) Water the lawn well one last time
- 4) Cut lawn as low as possible



- 5) Convert your spray heads to drip heads

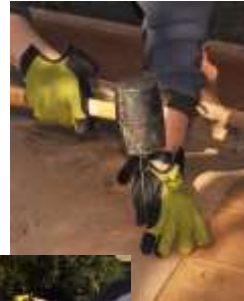


Next . . .

- 6) Bevel edges that contact hardscape to accommodate 5" - 6" of compost/soil & mulch
- 7) Plant 5 gal + plants so the rootball extends 3" - 4" above soil surface

Then . . .

- 7) Lay cardboard over lawn; overlap each piece 6" - 8"
- 8) Optional: use U stakes to hold cardboard in place
- 9) Wet cardboard as you work



Tip: "Many hands make quick work"



Finally . . .

- If waiting until fall to plant: Spread 2" – 3" layer of compost on cardboard and top with 2"- 3" of mulch
- If planting immediately: Spread a 3"- 4" layer of soil on cardboard, plant 4" plants, install drip irrigation, then top with 2"- 3" of mulch
- If sheet mulching for weed suppression: skip compost, cover cardboard with mulch only
- Water each layer applied thoroughly

Remember . . .



New plants will require regular water until they develop their mature root system (2-3 years)

- Keep mulch and compost well away from the crown and stems of plants
- Protect plants from snails, slugs, & rodents that may hide under mulch

Sign Up for QWEL

- We refer clients to qwel.net to find help with their lawn removal projects
- We've had over 400 requests for Garden Sense visits in the past year

