

## **APPLEWOOD ACRES GARDENING SHARES TIPS TO A HEALTHY AND PESTICIDE FREE LAWN**

Toronto, ON March 23, 2006- Richard Brzakala, Owner of Applewood Acres Gardening & Landscaping and Applewood Property Management shared the following tips on attaining an organic and pesticide free lawn.

**Applewood Acres Gardening & Landscaping ("Applewood") does not support the use and or application of any form of artificial and/or chemical substance(s) that may be, or is suspected, of causing health risks to humans, animals, or the environment.**

**Applewood believes that practising responsible horticultural requires a thorough understanding of a clients green space, and that 'feeding the soil is more important then feeding the plant'.**

**At Applewood we believe that proper gardening and lawn care begins with delivering organic and natural fertilizers to the soil along with the following tips will ensure a sustainable and safer green space for our clients, their neighbours and their communities to enjoy.**

- **Develop healthy soil by spreading organic and natural composted manure. Where possible, most lawns should have a 4-6 inch dark soil base which will serve to generate micro-organisms such as beneficial worms and ultimately benefit the entire turf green space.**
- **Plant pest-resistant grass. Contact Applewood to learn the best local varieties. Two or more types are preferable.**
- **Over seeding with hardy grass strains promotes hardy and thicker growth while choking out and reducing unwanted weeds.**
- **Perform lawn aeration at least once a year. Aerating, which removes plugs of soil, allows water, air and nutrients to reach grass roots.**
- **De thatch and remove patchy clumps of dead grass which can 'suffocate' healthy grass and promote unwanted moldy grass build-up. If 1/2 inch thick or more, thatch becomes home for grass roots, which will be susceptible to insects and disease. Applewood reduces thatch by either aerating, adding organic matter or deep raking once a year.**
- **Proper soil pH. Applewood will perform seasonal soil samples which may indicate clues of pH imbalance and poor soil quality. e.g.dandelions like a higher pH than grass. Lime and sulphur can be used to adjust pH.**

- Fertilize once a year, either in the fall or spring. A soil test will determine your lawn's nutrient needs. As a general rule Applewood uses only organic fertilizers with balanced ratio of numbers close in proximity, such as 5-3-4.
- Water properly -- not too much or too little -- to avoid pest outbreaks. Apply enough to wet the grass root zone. The soil should be nearly dry between waterings. Short, frequent sprinkling promotes shallow roots. Never water during the day time (10-4), unless new sod has been laid.
- Mow with a sharp blade at 3-inch height to maintain grass's competitive ability. Don't cut more than one-third of the grass blade in a single mowing, and leave a light layer of clipping to boost lawn nutrients. Vary mowing patterns to avoid soil compaction by wheels.