

Your Yard

Time For Spring Greening

(NAPSA)—Whether you love to get down and dirty or think yard work is for the birds, you can save a lot of money by taking note of these easy and affordable lawn and garden tips:

Keep Grass Looking Sharp

- For thick, well-conditioned grass, use a good balance of nitrogen, phosphorous and a compound called potash to grow. Find a fertilizer with a high nitrogen number to provide grass with much-needed nutrients.

- Check for thatch (dead grass and roots lying on the surface), which prevents fertilizer and water from penetrating the soil and reaching grass roots. Rake the lawn and overseed using a quality grass seed followed by a starter fertilizer.

If reseeding isn't necessary, use a pre-emergent with fertilizer, which will establish a barrier preventing weed seeds from germinating and give your lawn added nutrients.

Everything's Coming Up Roses

- Trees and shrubs remain dormant until early spring. To prune properly, cut back any dead or decaying branches with a sharp pruner or lopping shear.

- It's best to prune plants and bushes that bloom in early spring at the end of the blooming period.

It's The Way To Grow

- Late spring provides the best time to plant annuals and perennials as weather has warmed and there's little chance of frost. Make sure soil temperatures are approximately 70 to 80 degrees and the soil is not soggy.

Prepare planting beds by turning the soil, cultivating and adding a good 12-12-12 general purpose fertilizer.



For the best results, planting should be done in soil that's 70 to 80 degrees.

It Doesn't Take A Lot Of Green

- You can find many lawn and garden accessories and decorative items at prices lower than wholesale at popular closeout retailers such as Big Lots, Pic 'N' Save and Mac Frugal's. Among the largest seasonal retailers in the country, these stores have a huge selection of merchandise at rock-bottom prices, from outdoor tools and planters to patio furniture and the ever-popular pink flamingos.

The Sky's The Limit

- Spice up your outdoor area with accessories like birdhouses, garden stools, patio animals and planter holders. Think creatively by planting a butterfly garden for added color or a children's garden where youngsters can see—and eat—the fruits of their labor. When prices are this low, there's no limit to where your green thumb and imagination can take you.

To learn more about closeout shopping or to find the location of a Big Lots store near you, visit the Web site at www.biglots.com. Big Lots, Inc. (which includes Big Lots, Pic 'N' Save and Mac Frugal's) operates more than 1,300 retail stores in 46 states.