

Eco-Friendly Yard Tips

The start of spring gets people excited about working in the yard. These days, many people want to create yards that are easier to maintain and more eco-friendly, but they don't know where to start. The nation's lawn and landscape association, the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), offers consumers tips for making their yards and gardens more eco-friendly.

Creating an eco-friendly yard

Test your soil. To ensure that you have a healthy yard, check the pH level of the soil. Either have a professional do it or get a test kit from your local agricultural extension office. Nothing will grow well if the pH balance is off.

Create a yard that has a rich biomass by planting in layers. The amount of biomass in a square foot is measured by the number of different types of plants, animals, and insects that live in that space. The rainforest, for instance, has an incredibly rich biomass. A rich biomass produces more oxygen, sequesters more carbon, and supports local native animals and insects that help keep the ecosystem healthy.

Plant the right plants in the right places. Make sure that you are planting shade plants in shady areas and plants that need sun in bright areas. Doing so will create less stress on the plants, which will help to keep them disease-free.

Create a yard that uses less water. Look for plants and grasses that use less water. Different plants have different watering needs. Research it, and don't use a one-size-fits-all approach to watering. Also, water your yard either early in the morning or late in the day, and water less often but for a longer time.

For more information, or to find a lawn care and landscape professional, log on to LandcareNetwork.org/findaprofessional or call the PLANET office at (800) 395-2522.