



Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Lawn Care Apprenticeship Tasks

Developed in concert with the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association

Introduction:	The University of Wisconsin - Madison Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program (TAP) consists of a 12-week, in-person educational bootcamp and field-based apprenticeship at a turfgrass facility. Completion of the educational bootcamp is required prior to initiation of the apprenticeship. This document details the specific requirements related to completion of the apprenticeship for students interested in the lawn care industry. Successful completion of both the educational bootcamp and the apprenticeship is required to earn the Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program Certificate of Completion.
Requirements:	Apprentices must complete all of the tasks listed below and have their direct, on-site supervisor verify they have sufficiently completed each activity. Certain tasks listed below may not be applicable to the operation (i.e. if mowing is not an offered), in those cases the supervisor should mark 'N/A' on the signature line and sign and date. These tasks were developed with input from the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association and are designed to approximate the skills expected of a new Turf Technician Manager (or similar job title). Once the supervisor verifies completion they should sign and date to the right of each task listed below. Upon completion of all the tasks, the completed booklet can be presented to either Paul Koch or Doug Soldat in person or by scanning and emailing the completed booklet to one of the instructors. Once the apprentice booklet has been received and documented by Paul or Doug a final Turfgrass Apprenticeship Program Certificate of Completion will be mailed to the student. Records of completion will be permanently kept on file by Paul Koch and Doug Soldat.
Documentation:	Daily journals and written reports are strongly encouraged, but not required, during the apprenticeship. Daily journals will help the apprentice keep record of task completion, facility operation, and professional skills obtained throughout the duration of the apprenticeship. The journal should be well organized and include regular documentation using photos and videos. Upon completion of the apprenticeship the journal can be transformed into a portfolio to be used when applying for future job opportunities and differentiate the apprentice's experience from other applicants.

Contact Information: If you have any questions regarding any of the apprenticeship tasks on this list or anything related to the apprenticeship program, please contact either Doug Soldat or Paul Koch. We hope you have a great experience during your apprenticeship!

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List of Apprenticeship Tasks for Sod Production



OUTSIDE OPERATIONS

<i>Safety</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Review and follow safety training for all equipment owned by the company (mowers, trimmers, sprayers, etc.)		
Review/summarize farm SDS binder, Right to Know station.		
Review/summarize farm first aid and fire suppression.		
Review/summarize safety equipment provided at the shop.		

<i>Planting</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Properly prepare a seed bed for planting.		
Seed, mulch, and fertilize a new seeding. Describe the species and cultivars chosen and why they were chosen for this particular location. Document the maintenance plan for the new seeding.		
Prepare and install sod on a property. Describe the species and cultivars chosen and why they were chosen for this particular location. Document the maintenance plan for the new sod installation.		

<i>Fertilizing</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Acquire proper training necessary to correctly fertilize a lawn. This may include understanding fertilizer spreader settings, accurately performing area measurement, properly calibrating spreader, etc.		
Perform a soil test utilizing proper soil sampling techniques.		
Calculate fertilizer needs for seed establishment, grow-in and maintenance.		
Following proper training, set spreader, load and apply fertilizer to a property. Document application.		
Review/report how fertilizer application records and inventory are maintained.		

<i>Irrigation</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Measure soil water content or measure evapotranspiration rates to determine irrigation needs.		
Work with supervisor to setup, adjust and operate different irrigation systems.		

<i>Mowing</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Learn about mowing height, patterns, and equipment maintenance.		
Check and grease a mower.		
Operate a mower to mow a lawn.		
Properly sharpen a mower blade.		

<i>Pest Control</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
View pesticide Worker Protection Training Video		
Review/report how pesticide records and inventory are maintained.		
Review pesticide storage and loading areas.		
Identify/diagnose 3 abiotic turf stress issues at one or more properties. Develop/document a maintenance plan to remedy each.		
Properly identify a weed pest at a property and list the proper cultural and chemical actions needed to resolve the problem.		
Properly identify an insect pest at a property and list the proper cultural and chemical actions needed to resolve the problem.		
Properly identify a disease pest at a property and list the proper cultural and chemical actions needed to resolve the problem.		
Following proper training, mix, load and spray a pesticide using a Z sprayer, hose-reel sprayer, or similar apparatus.		
Review/report how pesticide application records are maintained.		

INSIDE OPERATIONS

<i>Office</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Learn/ observe all customer relations: phone, written communications, etc.		
Observe procedures and management for orders placed over the phone or internet.		
Review and provide summary of your company's invoice processes. Note: apprentice should report only on processes. <u>Do not include any customer or company detail.</u>		
Document payroll and record time keeping procedures.		

<i>Marketing and Sales</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Observe marketing outreach, including online communications and platforms used.		
If applicable, draft, get approval, and post an item of interest summarizing a project or event at your company on social media.		

<i>Management Decisions</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Review and provide summary of your company's operating and capital budget process.		

<i>Equipment Maintenance</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Review/report how equipment maintenance records are maintained.		
Review/report how equipment and parts inventory are maintained.		
Perform routine service on a piece of equipment (lubricant check/change, grease, height check and adjustment, tire pressure).		
Review/report your company's equipment maintenance plan (preventative maintenance, service intervals, etc.).		

RELATIONSHIPS

<i>Employee</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Observe supervisor methods of communication (face to face, text, two-way radio), demeanor and document effective communication methods.		
Organize and execute a staff team building event. (Examples: crew photo, cookout, safety training, recreational activity).		

<i>Customer</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Observe customer service techniques and application of company policy.		
Explain to a customer the services being performed on a particular visit and why they are important for the health of the lawn.		

<i>Owner/Farm Manager</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Observe traits for success, management style.		

<i>Vendor Relationships</i>	<i>Supervisor signature upon successful completion</i>	<i>Date</i>
Observe when and how products are ordered, inventory and records management.		