



# Keep the Clover!

## Why Would You Want Clover in Your Lawn?






**Read on!**

Clover is one of those legume plants, like fava beans and alfalfa, that actually sucks nitrogen from the air and stores it in its roots. As the roots die back, the nitrogen is replenished into the soil. Think of clover as free fertilizer storage bins for your lawn.

Lawn consisting of just 5% clover will actually produce up to two pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet, or half the recommended nitrogen per year. To achieve an efficient 5% clover mix in your lawn, evenly spread about 1 ounce of seed per 1000 square feet of lawn. With clover producing half your lawn's nitrogen needs, and by leaving your mulched lawn clippings on the lawn after mowing, you will likely not have to apply any additional nitrogen fertilizer.

Clover only begins to convert nitrogen from the air when "infected" with beneficial soil bacteria called rhizobia, which builds nodules of nitrogen on the clover's roots. Most good soils in temperate regions will have this bacteria, but if in doubt (for instance, there's no clover in your area at all), find a field with clover and dig up a bit of soil to add to your yard.

Here are some other benefits of including clover in your lawn:

-  Nitrogen provided by clover will not leach out of your lawn, and will not change your soil's pH like some synthetic nitrogen can do.
-  Clover will often outcompete other weeds, acting as weed prevention for your lawn.
-  Strong, deep roots makes it a hardy and resilient plant – it's very low maintenance, making it ideal for the organic lawn gardener.
-  Clover remains green all year, even without fertilizer, adding to the aesthetic beauty of your lawn in times of drought.
-  The presence of clover indicates good soil fertility, so if it is not thriving, it means you need to build-up the health of your soil.

*Information courtesy of Chris Molnar, [goorganicgardening.com](http://goorganicgardening.com)*