

## Tips for Great-looking, Pesticide-free Yards

- **Mow high.** This leads to stronger, healthier grass and will shade out many weeds. Generally, 3 to 4 inches is best. Cutting grass too short weakens your lawn.
- **Don't bag it.** Leave your lawn clippings as long as they are not clumping. Decomposing clippings provide nutrients, especially nitrogen, and reduce the need for fertilizer. Grass clippings do not add to thatch.
- **Mow with a sharp blade.** Sharper mower blades make a clean cut, while dull ones rip the grass, weakening your lawn's natural defenses.
- **Use organic fertilizers if you need to fertilize.** Organic fertilizers, in addition to providing nutrients, add organic material to the soil, improve soil structure, and aid water infiltration.
- **Aerate the soil as needed.** Aeration reduces thatch build up and improves water and fertilizer penetration.
- **Reseed bare areas.** Late Aug. - Sept. are good times to repair bare spots.
- **Go native.** Replace portions of your lawn with native Iowa prairie plants, and perennials. These attract birds, butterflies, beneficial insects and no mowing is required.
- **Be more tolerant.** A few dandelions won't harm you but pesticides might.

## Collaborators:

Mayor's Office, City of Cedar Falls  
Waterloo Public Library  
Cedar Falls Public Library  
Black Hawk County Health Dept.  
Hearst Center for the Arts  
City of Waterloo Leisure Services Commission  
Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management, UNI Roadside Office  
Center for Energy and Environmental Education, UNI  
Recycle and Reuse Technology Transfer Center, UNI  
Waterloo Public Schools  
City of Cedar Falls Human & Leisure Services  
UNI Wellness and Recreation Services  
UNI Global Health Corps  
Iowa Waste Reduction Center  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
ME&V

## Yards for Kids



Working for Ecological  
Alternatives to Lawn  
Pesticides

Center for Energy and  
Environmental Education

