Wood's Ear Mushrooms

Next time you see these ear-shaped fungus growing on dead wood, stop to pick up a snack! Wood's Ear Mushrooms are delicious and nutritious! Full of protein, iron, and calcium, you can add these to your soup for added texture and nutrition or dry them for later use.

As always, remember to practice sustainable harvesting- never take more than half, and harvest in a way that minimizes harm.
“Every year across the country, lawns consume nearly 3 trillion gallons of water a year, 200 million gallons of gas (for all that mowing), and 70 million pounds of pesticides.” - NDRC.org

According to the National Resource Defense Council, turf grass lawns cover about 50 million acres in the U.S. There are a few issues with grass besides the unsustainable maintenance, it is also not biologically diverse nor is it structurally diverse. The pros to a food garden or a garden over just grass are growing human food, of course, as well as providing food, shelter, water, and habitat for pollinators and local wildlife. So let’s get rid of that lawn!!

First there are a few things to consider when deciding if you should remove your grass entirely, or simply landscape over it:
1) What kind of grass do you have? Classic lawn grass that doesn’t creep and run like fescue can just be covered, while other types have to be removed.
2) What is the desired use and design of the garden? For instance, do you want to make raised beds because grass can easily be smothered by them and some weed block landscape fabric. Or would you like to direct seed, which would include removing all the grass.
3) Lastly, how will everything be watered? Does your area experience droughts? Will you use sprinklers, drip tape, or hand water your new garden? In order to use less water than a lawn, figuring out irrigation of your garden is an important step in planning it.

Now you have a plan, so how do we get rid of that grass?
There are three ways to remove the grass. One way to do so is to use old fashioned shovel and muscle to dig down to the roots of the grass and just shovel it out of the way. Another option is to use a sod cutter, that will get to the root of the grass but also pulls it up in larger sections. Finally, you could choose to till the lawn. Although tilling ruins the microbes in the soil and creates an environment for weeds, tilling the lawn this one time allows you to save some of the topsoil and puts the grass into the ground. On the other hand you could choose to smother the grass, again this works best for grasses that do not creep. You can smother it with deep mulch or solarize it. Solarizing grass is using a transparent plastic tarp that will trap the sun’s heat to kill off the grass.

Last steps!
Before you can start your garden, it’s recommended that you cover the bare ground. The cover will help set your pathways from your beds if you are direct planting or will aid in the bottom of raised beds. You can choose to use landscape fabric, corrugated cardboard and paper (which is biodegradable!) or if you didn’t have too many weeds, you can just use mulch like wood chips or dead leaves. If you are worried about how tidy the garden will look, using edging and borders can drastically improve the look!

Happy gardening!

For more detailed information check out: https://homesteadandchill.com/remove-grass-grow-food-not-lawns/

Book: Food Not Lawns by H.C. Flores