

Safe & Efficient Sod Hauling & Trailing Guide



Red Hen's sod is harvested on-demand, fresh-to-order, weather-permitting. While Red Hen will deliver 500 Sq. Ft. (1 standard pallet) or more of sod, if you have the means of picking sod up, it's always worth getting quotes for both scenarios.

When you pick sod up at Red Hen Turf Farm during our loading hours, we will always prefer to load your sod on the pallet, by using one of our forklifts.

Picking up sod is a 4-step process.

1. Reserve sod pick-up orders at least 1 day in advance, if possible.
2. On the morning of your reservation, we contact you to confirm the earliest loading time we can accommodate.
3. Ensure your vehicle is set up for hauling your load. The tips below should be helpful for you to determine whether your vehicle will safely and efficiently haul sod, or whether you may want to consider delivery instead.
4. On the day of your sod pick-up, first you will come to our Office, then we will provide directions to the field where we're currently harvesting fresh-to-order, and Red Hen will gladly use our forklifts to load your picked-up sod into your vehicle. Your sod will generally be loaded on a wood pallet that is approximately 4 ft. by 4 ft. A full pallet can carry up to 50-60 rolls of sod, which is 500-600 sq. ft., weighing about 1800-2100 lbs per pallet.

The most common problems that we encounter when loading various vehicles are:

1. Customers do not bring and are not prepared to use the appropriate tie downs.
2. No good access to load trailer with Red Hen's Forklifts because the trailer has a drop-down gate that can not be removed and/or ramps that the forklifts cannot safely drive on.
3. Tires have not been checked for wear or air pressure.
4. Trailer is not rated for the weight of even 1 pallet of sod.

If you ultimately decide to pick up sod, the Law puts the responsibility of providing proper transportation and equipment for SAFE and LEGAL hauling squarely on your shoulders. This includes proper cargo tie-down equipment, properly equipped vehicles and the knowledge and skills to execute the practices safely.

Being mindful of this could literally save someone's life!

If you want to become REALLY EDUCATED about hauling cargo and equipment, we suggest you search Google for **Purdue University's FREE 85-Page GUIDE, "Securing the Load: A Guide to Safe and Legal Transportation of Cargo and Equipment."** We can email Purdue's guide to you directly if you prefer.

The very least you should know when picking up sod includes:

1. You need a vehicle that can haul the load safely. A full pallet of sod (500 sq. ft.) can weigh 2000-3000 pounds depending on recent rains or irrigation.
2. Make sure you have a vehicle that can pull the loaded trailer and also make sure the vehicle is designed to pull the loaded weights.
3. If you bring a trailer, make sure it is designed to hold the weight you want to haul, and make sure the tires can handle the load.
4. CHECK THE TIRE AIR PRESSURE of YOUR VEHICLE and THE TRAILER.
5. With a Trailer, Safety chains should be properly rigged to tow vehicle, not to hitch or ball
6. With a Trailer, the Coupler should be secured, tight, and locked. Refer to the “Coupling To Tow Vehicle” section of your manual.
7. Lights: Test Tail, Stop, and Turn Lights
8. Bring something to tie down the sod on the pallets. Ratchet tie down straps work best.

With a Trailer, Follow the safety checks after 10, 25, and 50 miles as described below.

After 10 Miles	After 25 Miles	After 50 Miles
Retighten lug nuts	Retighten lug nuts	Check that Coupler is Secured
Check tire pressure	Check tire pressure	Check that safety chains are fastened and not dragging
Check that Coupler is Secured	Check that Coupler is Secured	Check that Sod is Secured

A Few Examples of Picked-Up Sod Loads		
Your Pick-Up Vehicle	Typical Maximum # of Rolls	Approx. Weight
Small car trunk	10 hand-loaded	400 lbs
Big car trunk	15 hand-loaded	600 lbs
Small pickup truck	40 hand-loaded	1600 lbs
1/2 ton pickup truck	50 on 1 Pallet	2050 lbs
3/4 ton pickup truck	100 Rolls (50 on 1 Pallet & 50 hand-loaded)	4050 lbs
1 ton pickup truck and secured trailer w/straps	100 Rolls on 2 Pallets	4100 lbs
A FULL 4ftX4ft WOOD PALLET can hold 500 - 600 SF (or 50 - 60 Rolls) of Sod and Weighs about 1,800—2,100 lbs per Pallet		

We truly want you to get home with all of your sod safely, and the people following you will appreciate your diligence.

Also, it is required by law.