CaSi Doesn’t Strengthen Creeping Bent, Tall Fescue against Foliar Disease

By Jack Fry, Qi Zhang, Kathy Lowe and Ned Tisserat

Some researchers report that one potential tool for reducing fungicide requirements on turfgrasses may be the use of silicon (Si) fertilizers. Silicon has been reported to suppress diseases on various crops in the last decade (Raid et al., 1992; Chérif et al., 1994; Deren et al., 1994; Seebold et al., 2000; Seebold et al., 2001).

Researchers in North Carolina found that brown patch and dollar spot on creeping bentgrass were reduced approximately 20 percent and 30 percent, respectively, when soluble potassium silicate (21 percent SiO$_2$) at 0.5 pounds per 1,000 square feet was applied (Uriarte et al., 2004). However, in that study measurable increases in potassium but not Si occurred in creeping bentgrass leaves.

Gray leaf spot on St. Augustinegrass was reduced 9 percent to 28 percent by Si alone (100 pounds per 1,000 square feet) and 59 percent to 68 percent with the com-

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Brown patch on L93 creeping bentgrass as affected by calcium silicate at the Kansas City Country Club. Rates indicate amounts applied per 1,000 square feet. Data were collected in August 2002 and 2003 and July 2004. No differences occurred in 2002 or 2004. All treatments were different (P<0.05) in 2003.