

NEMATODES OF IMPORTANCE ON TURFGRASS

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Many species of plant-parasitic nematodes feed on roots of turfgrasses. However, this damage is often not properly diagnosed. Symptoms of plant-parasitic nematode feeding are often patchy in distribution and irregular in shape. They include yellowing of turf, stunting and subsequently plant death, resulting in bare areas that frequently become infested with broad-leafed weeds. Nematodes known to feed on turfgrasses in Michigan include needle, lance, root-knot, sheath, root-lesion, stunt, ring and spiral nematodes. More often than not, several of these nematodes will be present together often at levels above damage thresholds. All plant-parasitic nematodes are microscopic, so detection requires collection of root and soil samples from the margins of infected areas and submission of these samples to a Nematode Diagnostic Lab such as the one at M.S.U. Preplant and post-plant management options are available for nematode control. Preplant options consist of proper turfgrass selection and the use of fumigant nematicides. Post-plant options involve cultural practices aimed at minimizing the impact of nematodes and nonfumigant nematicides if nematode population densities warrant their use.