

Money Topic

DOLLAR SPOT DOMINATES DISCUSSION

AT OHIO STATE/OHIO TURFGRASS FIELD DAY

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

If I had a nickel for every time someone mentioned dollar spot at the recent Turfgrass Research Field Day sponsored by The Ohio State University (OSU) and the Ohio Turfgrass Foundation (OTF), I'd have enough money to make fungicide applications on my lawn for two years to battle the dreaded disease.

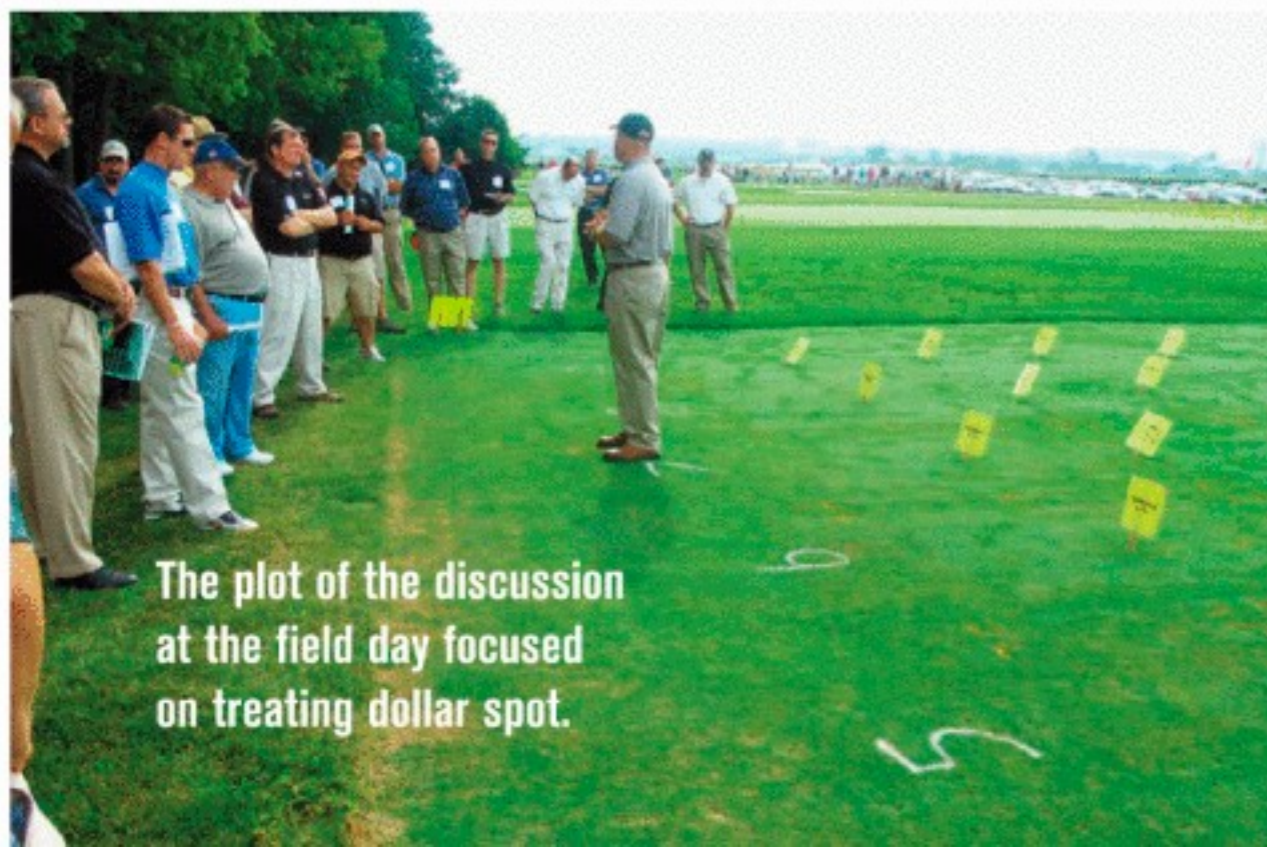
Indeed, dollar spot was the money topic at the field day, where several OSU researchers have been testing it in a variety of capacities. The researchers shared their results to the several hundred people who attended the event on Aug. 13 at the OTF Research and Education facility in Columbus, Ohio.

Mike Boehm, chair of OSU's department of plant pathology, has been part of a team evaluating fungicides for dollar spot control in creeping bentgrass and *Poa annua*. Boehm said the researchers have made good strides on determining the right timing of fungicide applications to achieve their best results based on weather patterns rather than time of year.

The study revealed that fungicide applications made in the fall will last to the following spring if that fall application was followed by cold weather. "However, if you hit it in the fall and it stays warm through January, you don't see that type of response," Boehm added.

Boehm said an April fungicide application can delay dollar spot's normal summer arrival by about three weeks. "So by the time dollar spot kicks in in June, it's three weeks behind the power curve. And if we're lucky, dollar spot doesn't get nasty until the end of June. And after that, it gets hot and dry, and dollar spot doesn't want to be a problem then anyway."

Boehm said the research from the study will ultimately lead to the smart targeting of disease-causing pathogens rather than treating the symptoms of the diseases.



The plot of the discussion at the field day focused on treating dollar spot.

Quotable

"This weed seems to give people fits. I probably get more calls from our sales guys about *Poa annua* than anything else."

— Laurence Mudge, technical development representative for Bayer Environmental Science, on the mother of all troublesome weeds.

"Golf clubs are sometimes seen as mysterious places and inherently bad because rich people go there. But they are probably the most sustainable economic engines in any given community."

— Jim Singerling, CEO of Club Managers Association of America, on the business of golf.

John Street, associate professor in Ohio State's department of horticulture and crop science, discussed the influence of nitrogen sources and rates as well as plant growth regulator combinations on creeping bentgrass color and dollar spot incidence and severity. Among other things, Street said the study determined that foliar feeding in combination with PGRs didn't intensify or reduce dollar spot.

Street also said the study revealed that frequent foliar feeding applications work better to suppress dollar spot than less frequent applications. "Applying .125 pounds of nitrogen every week will work significantly better than applying .25 pounds of nitrogen every two weeks," he said.

Karl Danneberger, an Ohio State professor in the department of horticulture and crop science, spoke about the impact of dew on dollar spot incidence. Danneberger discovered that if greens are rolled early in the morning and guttation water from dew is diminished, less dollar spot will occur.

"You can get a good feel for dew if you go out after the greens have been mowed and roll a golf ball across the green," says Danneberger, a *Golfdom* columnist. "If you pick up the ball and it sticks in your hand ... that's guttation water. Anecdotally, [the presence of guttation means] the potential of dollar spot is a lot greater." ■