

SPORTS TURF MANAGER

... for safe, natural sports turf

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ONTARIO TURFGRASS SYMPOSIUM, JANUARY 19-21

What's new for 2004?

Exciting New Location. Sheraton on the Falls is Niagara's foremost four diamond resort hotel located only minutes from most of the area's top attractions.

More Dedicated Trade Show Hours. In response to exhibitor feedback, we now have a full morning of trade show only – 8:00 am until 1:00 pm on Jan. 20th with no competition from educational sessions. An added bonus is the complimentary breakfast from 8:00 to 9:00 am.

Voluntary IPM Accreditation CECs. See inside on page 4 for details.

New Facility Management Program. A new session will feature presentations on hosting world class sporting and entertainment events.

Using Compost on Turfgrass Pam Charbonneau

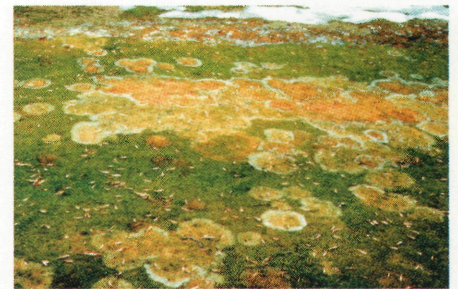
APPLICATIONS HAVE REDUCED PINK AND GREY SNOW MOULD

Snow mould diseases such as typhula blight (*Typhula ishikariensis*, *Typhula incarnata*) and fusarium patch (*Microdochium nivale*) are turfgrass diseases that can damage sports fields. Fungicides are not commonly used on sports fields because of the cost and general trend toward pesticide reduction in the municipal arena. An alternative to snow mould management is the development and use of organic amendments such as composts, organic fertilizers, and sewage sludges. The use of composts and other organic amendments for disease suppression represents an exciting alternative for sports fields.

To date, applications of compost to turfgrass have been shown to reduce thatch, provide a rapid spring green-up, increase turf density, provide nutrients, increase earthworm activity and enhance soil microbial activity.

Composts are known to suppress plant diseases through a combination of physiochemical and biological characteristics. Physiochemical characteristics include any physical or chemical aspects of composts which reduce disease severity by directly or indirectly affecting the pathogen or host capacity for growth. Some of these factors are nutrition of pathogen or host, soil organic matter, soil moisture, soil pH, turf colour, and fertilizer effects, to name a few.

Biological disease control could be a result of microbial populations of composts which are competing for nutrients with pathogens, producing antibiotics and enzymes. Microbes can also parasitize plant diseases or feed on them (see Table 1 on page 6 for a summary



DR. TOM HSANG, UNIV. GUELPH

Top: A mix of grey and pink snow moulds on creeping bentgrass and Kentucky bluegrass (background). **Above:** Grey snow mould, with sclerotia, on the left. Pink snow mould (slightly smaller) on the right.

of microbial characteristics influencing disease suppression with composts).

Compost is considered a beneficial material because the high... → page 6

Merry Christmas 