

High endophyte levels in tall fescue does not deter grub feeding

A recent Kentucky study of the feeding habits of grubs, under both laboratory and field conditions, showed inconsistent results when the grubs feed on the roots of an endophyte-infected version and non-endophyte version of a variety of tall fescue. In the laboratory, the grubs would reduce their feeding on the endophyte-infected roots by as much as 35%. However, in the field, there was little or no reduction in feeding found by several means of measurement. The study did indicate that grub mortality averaged

twice as high in tall fescue and bluegrass stands versus ryegrass, bentgrass, and hard fescue stands.

TGT's view: Until shown otherwise, the level of endophyte infection in a turfgrass variety should not be a consideration in choosing a variety where grubs are the primary insect pest. Species choice should be a consideration in those determinations. -CS

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