

Predictions for the Future

by Gail L. Schumann
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The next decade is likely to decide the future of biological control agents in turfgrass disease management. A number of products are becoming available, as are several different application methods. Turfgrass offers an excellent potential success story for these products because of the intense, daily management of turfgrass, the budgets available, the ease of application to turfgrass compared to many other types of plants, and the mowing and regrowth of turfgrass leaf blades. The current investigations into which fungicides are compatible with biological agents will also be important to protect plants during intense periods of disease pressure.

I hope that the next decade will also see a shift in management philosophy back to providing optimal growing conditions for turfgrass. The most destructive diseases are those associated with fungi which destroy the roots and crowns of the plants. These diseases are difficult or impossible to control with fungicides and require long recovery times for the turf. They are also associated with increased traffic, lower mowing heights, and com-

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paction - all familiar problems to today's superintendent. Relatively modest modifications in playing conditions could prevent a lot of disease injury.

There is no doubt that a computer will become a necessary tool for all turfgrass managers and will aid in management decisions from irrigation to fertilizer and pesticide applications. Computers will also be important in improved communication among superintendents and with turfgrass specialists through the internet.

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