

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### The Influence of Fertilization Timing on Typhula Blight Occurrence

**T**ypchula blight or gray snow mold (*Typhula* spp.) can be a major problem on bentgrass (*Agrostis* spp.) turfs in the cooler climatic regions. A two-year investigation was conducted to assess the influence of various timings of nitrogen fertilization on the incidence of typhula blight.

The experimental site was at Boyne Highlands near Harbor Springs, Michigan, which is on a similar latitude to Minneapolis, Minnesota. The experimental site was a closely mowed Penncross creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*) turf on a large grass tennis court area. The root zone was a native sandy soil with a pH of 6.5. The turf was maintained at a cutting height of 0.5 inch (13 mm) and irrigated as needed to prevent visual wilt. Fungicides had not been applied to the experimental area during the previous spring and summer growing season.

**The treatment timings consisted of nitrogen fertilizer applications on August 15th, September 15th, October 15th, and November 15th** at rates of 0.5 and 1.0 pound per 1,000 square feet (0.25 and 0.5 kg/100 m<sup>2</sup>). The plot size was 6 by 10 feet (1.8 x 3 m) with 4 replications in a randomized block design.

**Results.** The typhula blight occurrence was very uniform across the experimental area, ranging from 40 to 95% damage, depending on the specific treatment. **A fertilizer timing on September 15th resulted in a doubling of typhula blight incidence, when compared to fertilization applications made either 30 days before or after the September 15th timing.** This dramatic negative response indicates that the timing of nitrogen fertilization can have a major influence on the severity of typhula blight occurrence. Avoiding the September nitrogen fertilization would also translate to enhanced ease of fungicide control for this disease. Are other diseases of turfgrasses also influenced by the timing of nitrogen fertilization? **by James B Beard and David P. Martin. Turfgrass Research Report, Michigan State University.**

## Communicating Seasonal Timing

**T**he terminology for timing of cultural practices frequently involves the use of terms such as early fall, late fall, and late spring. Point in fact this creates a confusing situation. The actual definition of fall is the season when leaves fall from certain trees. The more correct terminology is to use the word **autumn—which is defined as the season between summer and winter, extending from the September 23 equinox to the December 22 solstice, in the northern hemisphere.** If the seeding of cool-season turfgrasses is recommended for early fall, this would represent the last week in September and the first 2 weeks in October, when in fact the preferred timing would be late summer, involving the first 3 weeks of September in many climatic regions. Similarly, the term late fall fertilization would imply the first 3 weeks in December, when in fact the intended communication is for a period in the range of 6 to 8 weeks earlier, depending on the climatic region.

Finally, **spring is defined as a season between winter and summer, which is the period from the March 21 equinox to the June 22 solstice, in the northern hemisphere.** It is important to use the correct terminology in relation to spring, particularly in guidelines concerning the timing of planting warm-season turfgrasses and the initial post-winter fertilization timing.

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