

Research finds new control for summer decline complex

Research conducted in 1995 reveals more good news for landscape managers—especially golf superintendents—who battle summer decline complex, a combination of environmental stress, pythium and rhizoctonia.

As roots and crowns are influenced by summer decline, they die and plants are weakened, leaving them open to further infection. This complex causes large turf areas to become discolored, lose vigor and—if left untreated—to die.

Fungicide treatment with a tank-mix combination of Chipco Aliette WDG and Fore provides excellent control of summer decline complex, according to Dr. Leon Lucas, who conducted the research at North Carolina State University. And even better protection can be achieved by mixing those chemicals with a flowable formulation of Fore. (Mancozeb fungicides other than Fore were not as effective.)

"It is important to note, however, that a compatibility agent such as Blendex must be used with the flowable formulation of Fore [so] that it does not precipitate out of solution."

Fertilizer impact

New research also shows that excessive rates of certain types of fertilizers can play a key role in the onset of diseases. High levels of soluble salt from high-potassium fertilizers cause significant stress and

damage to turf root systems during dry weather.

About 150 to 250 parts per million of soluble salts are sufficient for optimal plant growth. While relatively high levels of soluble salt fertilizers are harmless during wet weather, salt levels of more than 300 parts per million have been associated with increased root rot and bentgrass decline during drier weather, Lucas notes. He recommends applying one-half the recommended rate of fertilizers twice as often to help protect turf from injury and subsequent disease infestation.

The high temperatures, high relative humidity and wet conditions experienced during the summer of 1995 was an example of what summer stress can do in the extreme.

Serious disease problems such as brown patch, pythium blight, summer patch, anthracnose, and take-all patch were reported in high levels throughout the cool-season climate zone.

A report from Ohio State University stresses the importance of correct diagnosis as a key to proper disease management. It is difficult to sort out all the factors resulting in brown grass, says the report, as there are many confusing symptoms. The interaction of disease, weather stress and damage from traffic was extensive. Preventive fungicide treatment can be a key to management.



AAN helps reform immigration laws

A two-pronged grassroots drive to reform immigration legislation has been launched by the American Association of Nurserymen (AAN), according to a press release.

"Congress is debating perhaps the most historic and far-reaching changes ever in our nation's immigration policies," the AAN notes. It expects employee sanctions to be "dramatically increased" as soon as a new immigration bill is passed and enacted by law.

"AAN supports control of our nation's borders and a system of employment eligibility verification that is simple and works," the release notes.

The AAN notes that the current Senate bill (S. 1394) is "outright dangerous and full of anti-employer provisions." The organization suggests that people in the green industry—especially AAN members—write to their U.S. Senators, opposing S. 1394 as written.

As long as you're in the writing mood, AAN recommends that you send letters, too, to your Congressmen "in support of establishing a temporary and seasonal agricultural worker program as a reform of the current, unworkable H-2A agricultural worker program."

For more information, contact Ben Bolusky's office at the AAN: (202) 789-2900.