



Pest Watch

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Crabgrass Control in Spring-Seeded Turf

The drought of 1991 left many lawns in poor shape. As a result, many areas have been reseeded or over-seeded this spring. The unusually cold weather in early spring forced many of these seedlings to go in late and delayed the establishment of early seedlings. The result will be relatively young, thin turf which will not compete well with crabgrass this summer. Additionally, this young grass could be injured by most crabgrass herbicides.

To control crabgrass in new spring seedings, Tupersan (siduron) may be applied at-seeding or at any time thereafter for preemergent control. This product only gives a few weeks of control. After the new turf has been mowed a couple of times, Dacthal (DCPA) can be used.

If crabgrass has already germinated, *what can you do?* Acclaim (fenoxaprop) can be used on seedling ryegrass or fescue as early as 4 weeks after emergence. Check the label for special rate recommendations for this timing. Bluegrass must be 2 to 3 months old before treatment. Bentgrass is even more sensitive than bluegrass. MSMA should only be applied to well established turf.

When using herbicides in newly seeded or overseeded turf, *carefully read the label*, as recommended rates, turf developmental stages, and other directions must be followed exactly, else injury may result. For more information on weed control in new seedings see the Cornell Cooperative Extension Information Bulletin #213, *Athletic Field Maintenance—A Guide for Sports Turf Managers*.

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Patch Disease Control Strategies

Now is the time to consider strategies for managing summer patch and necrotic ringspot diseases. Both diseases develop as small circular patches with a donut-like appearance. Necrotic ringspot patches can appear during the cooler periods of spring and fall whereas summer patch symptoms typically appear in late summer. Pathogens causing each of these diseases live in the soil and are favored by cool wet conditions. Control strategies must be taken early in the spring. Any cultural practices that will reduce plant stress and promote root development will minimize symptoms from summer patch and necrotic ringspot. Maintaining a balanced fertility program using slow-release fertilizers will also minimize stresses and thus disease severity. Problem areas may be overseeded with perennial ryegrass which is tolerant to these diseases. Additionally, some tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass varieties are tolerant of both diseases.

A number of systemic fungicides are effective in controlling summer patch and necrotic ringspot. Applications should be made on 21 to 28 day intervals once soil temperatures reach 50 to 55 degrees. Following application, fungicides should be immediately and thoroughly watered in for the most effective control. Fungicides such as Banner, Rubigan, Chipco 26019 and Tersan 1991 are effective in controlling both diseases. However, fungicides such as Bayleton, are only effective in managing summer patch. Consult your local Cornell Cooperative Extension agent for the latest control recommendations and application rates.

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