



Turf

Drechslera Leaf Spot

Pest Fact Sheet **42**

Introduction

Drechslera leaf spot is a common foliage problem of bluegrass, bentgrasses, fescues, and ryegrasses.

Description

Bluegrasses: On bluegrasses, the leaf spots are first seen as small, purplish areas. As these spots increase in size, the centers turn brown and eventually fade to a light tan with purplish brown borders. Primary damage comes from the crown decay phase of this disease. This occurs when the crown area becomes infected and the grass appears to be "melting" away. The overall disease pattern appears as a brownish melting-out of various size areas of turfgrass.

Bentgrasses: On bentgrasses, the disease is first seen as smokey-blue, irregularly shaped turf areas varying from several inches to 4 feet in diameter. Soon after, the grass turns yellow and dies. The first leaf symptoms are minute yellow flecks which soon progress to irregularly shaped, water-soaked blotches.

Disease cycle

The causal organism survives the winter in infected plants and infested debris from the previous year's stand. Roots, stems and rhizomes may be infected by mycelium in debris and soil. Leaf surfaces must be wet for infection to occur.

Leaf spots occur mainly in the spring and autumn. Disease severity may increase with the onset of warm summer weather. The leaf spot phase of disease development is frequently accompanied by a severe crown and root rot that reduces the vigor and drought tolerance of the plants.

Cultural control

To avoid moisture stress, water deeply, early in the day and as infrequently as possible. Avoid excessive nitrogen fertility, especially from early spring through midsummer. Reduce thatch if greater than 2 inches. Promote air circulation. Plant resistant cultivars.

Chemical control

Consult your county Extension Educator (see county office telephone listing on reverse side) for specific recommendations about pesticides and timing their application.

Summary

Causal agent	Fungus
Plant parts attacked	Leaves, also crown and root
Major symptoms	Bright yellow leaf blade or distinct, yellow-brown leaf spots with darkened borders
Time of first noticeable symptoms	Spring
Control program	Preventive fungicide sprays, resistant varieties, reduce nitrogen
Number of spray applications per season	Every 7 - 14 days

UNH Cooperative Extension County Office Telephone Numbers

Belknap (603) 527-5475	Carroll (603) 539-3331	Cheshire (603) 352-4550	Coos (603) 788-4961	Grafton (603) 787-6944
Hillsborough Goffstown (603) 641-6060	Merrimack (603) 796-2151	Rockingham Brentwood, NH 03833 (603) 679-5616	Strafford (603) 749-4445	Sullivan (603) 863-9200

Stop! It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. If unsure of registration status of a particular pesticide product, contact the NH Division of Pesticide Control at (603) 271-3550. Store pesticides in their original containers in a locked cabinet or shed away from food. Dispose of unused pesticides or empty containers safely, according to NH regulations. If you suspect pesticide poisoning, call the New Hampshire Poison Control Center at 1-800-562-8236.


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