

Anthracnose in Turfgrass

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Pathogen

Colletotrichum graminicola

Turfgrasses Affected

Primarily centipedegrass, but it is known to occur on all warm-season turfgrasses.

Occurrence

This disease is normally observed in the spring during periods of high moisture (rain or heavy fog) and warm temperatures. Disease severity is often greater on stressed turfgrass, especially during springs following cold winters.

Symptoms/Signs

Leaf infection appears as reddish-brown to brown spots that are often surrounded by a narrow yellow halo (Figure 1). Single spots may span the blade width causing leaf yellowing and then death of the leaf. Tiller infection results in girdling of stems and the development of small, yellow patches of turfgrass.

The fungus can be observed with a hand lens. It will appear as small, black, cushion-like structures (acervuli) with black spines (setae) extending from the cushion. These structures will be found at the base of leaves next to the stem.

Cultural Controls

Avoid potassium deficiency. Do not apply excessive nitrogen during potential disease development periods. Do not use readily available forms of nitrogen such as soluble liquids or quick-release nitrogen sources just prior to or during these periods. Instead, use slow-release nitrogen sources. Apply a balanced fertilizer containing equivalent amounts of potassium, preferably a slow-release potassium form.

Avoid drought stress. Irrigate deeply to saturate the root zone. Irrigate only in the early morning hours (between 2 and 8 AM) when dew is already present. If the diseased areas are associated with compacted soils, alleviate the compaction. If thatch is excessive, renovate.

Chemical Controls

azoxystrobin, chlorothalonil, myclobutanil, propiconazole, thiophanate methyl, triadimefon, and trifloxystrobin.

Chlorothalonil cannot be applied to a residential lawn, but it can be applied to turfgrass in a business or industrial landscape.

Refer to "Turfgrass Disease Management" PPP-64 for explanations of chemical and cultural controls.



Figure 1. Anthracnose symptoms on centipedegrass.