

How Bad Is The Australian Drought?



The eastern part of Australia is

experiencing record drought conditions.

From April 2002 to January 2003, severe drought conditions exist through Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and a large portion of South Australia. Lack of rainfall in eastern portions of Queensland are at all time lows since records were first kept in 1900.

The drought conditions were intensified with above normal temperatures for most of this area. With the dissipation of El Nino, more rainfall is expected this autumn for Queensland (60% to 70% chance).

Source: Commonwealth Bureau of Meterology

Lookout For LDS On High Sand Based Turf



Localised dry spots (LDS) are a serious problem on sand-based creeping bentgrass or couchgrass (bermudagrass) putting greens throughout South Africa and



Australia. Symptoms appear as circular areas varying from 100 cm to several meters in diameter that progress from a bluish wilt to a whitish brown color. In some instances, symptoms appear more serpentine. The cause of LDS is due to a hydrophobic soil condition that occurs in the upper 5 cm of the soil profile. Sand particles are partially coated with an organic material that repels water resulting in the wilt/drought like symptoms.

The source of the organic material may be a result of soil fungi. Fairy Ring is often, but not always associated with LDS. To determine if LDS is present, take a soil core from the suspected site and add water droplets along the soil profile. If the droplet beads and fails to penetrate, LDS is present. Usually the water will bead in the upper 2 to 4 cm of the soil profile. Wetting agents are effective in many situations and should be used if LSD is a problem. Reducing the amount of thatch accumulation and coring on a regular basis may help reduce LSD severity. In some instances where Fairy Ring is the cause, drenching an appropriate fungicide after coring may help alleviate symptoms.

Seashore Paspalum Varies In Appearance

Seashore Paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*) is a prostrate growing, stoloniferous and rhizomatous turfgrass that resembles bermudagrass. Two types of Paspalum species bahiagrass (*Paspalum notatum*) and dalligrass (*Paspalum dilatatum*)

differ from Seashore Paspalum in that they have a bunch-type growth habit. The texture of Seashore Paspalum varies from a medium to an extremely fine leaf texture, causing some confusion in identification.

Questions?

If you have questions about the Syngenta TechNotes SH contact Kate Dorahy at kate.dorahy@syngenta.com, Peter Sullivan at peter.sullivan@syngenta.com or your local Nuturf representative.