

Rapid Blight Occurs in Autumn



Rapid blight (pathogen: *Labyrinthula terrestris*) can occur on winter grass or creeping bentgrass greens.

Symptoms appear as irregularly shaped patches of yellow or brown turf ranging from 5 cm to 2 meters in diameter. Rapid blight outbreaks are associated with dry periods in the autumn and spring. This disease is predominantly associated with high soil salt or high salt in irrigation water. Creeping bentgrass or winter grass growing on soils with salt readings above 2.7 dS m⁻¹ (Saturated Paste Extraction Method 1:1) are predisposed to this disease. If this disease is a concern, frequent leaching needs to be done to reduce salt levels.

New Research into the Rapid Appearance of "Hot Spots" on Sand Greens



The phenomena of hot spots appearing on upslope portions of USGA constructed and California constructed putting greens has been investigated by a researcher, Dr. Edward McCoy, at The Ohio State University. Supported by field data, Dr. McCoy has developed computer models that simulate water movement in sloped USGA and California greens. In USGA constructed greens a perched water table is produced at the interface between the rootzone mix (sand and peat) and a gravel layer. The perched water table provides water to turfgrass roots in the rootzone mix. Interestingly, in Dr. McCoy's simulation a perched water table is also produced in the California constructed greens.

In the computer models a heavy rain event was simulated to both types of green with a 3% slope and then volumetric water content in the profile was monitored. In both systems the profiles can dry out substantially within 2 days. The perched water table was observed to migrate down slope. The result is little if any water is

supplied by the perched water table to the rootzone mix on the up slope.

Moisture loss to sloped areas of high sand content greens occurs rapidly. These areas will begin to suffer moisture stress within days of a relatively heavy rainfall event. To anticipate the appearance of these dry areas monitor with a soil probe or similar device to detect the relative dryness. Try to anticipate the dryness and irrigate (usually by hand) these sloped areas prior to the appearance of the hot spots.

Photograph below. Hot spots occur on high slope areas due in part to water migration down slope.



Questions?

If you have questions about the Syngenta TechNotes—SH contact Sam Hole at sam.hole@syngenta.com or visit www.greencast.com.au