

2006-PalmEmSaCel-1

Brown Patch (*Rhizoctonia solani*)

Situation Summary

Brown Patch is a disease that affects many turfgrass varieties including St. Augustinegrass, zoysiagrass, bermudagrass, and centipedegrass. The name describes the basic visual symptomology: brown patches in the turf. When left untreated, this disease will spread, eventually leaving large areas of dead turfgrass. However, there are ways of helping to prevent this disease. Likewise, if an area is affected, there are numerous fungicides that will help stop the spread of this disease.



Symptoms

As mentioned, the most distinguishing characteristics of this disease are the reddish brown circular and/or irregularly shaped patches in the turfgrass. Upon closer examination, one can see the lower stem areas displaying necrotic symptoms that lead to leaf wilting and the subsequent reddish brown areas that can eventually turn straw colored and die if left unchecked. These patches can start out as relatively small circular areas that can eventually expand into larger circular areas and/or irregular patches. In other instances, the disease can take on more of a ring-like appearance with green areas of turfgrass in the centers.



Diagnosis

Since there are other diseases that can show similar symptoms, it is highly encouraged that a sample of the affected area be tested by a lab for specific disease pathogens. Most landscape professionals can identify this disease by sight and treat accordingly; however, it is still a good idea to send in a test sample to eliminate any doubts. The time of year that the disease is occurring is also an important factor in diagnosing this or any other disease. Since this specific pathogen becomes active at 73 degrees Fahrenheit and goes dormant in the root zone at around 90 degrees Fahrenheit, you will want to only consider it during times where the temperature falls into this range (most damaging between 80 and 85 degrees Fahrenheit).

Chemical Treatment

A chemical fungicide treatment is the most effective way of dealing with this disease, both preventatively and after infection has occurred.

There are numerous fungicides that can be utilized to treat this disease including Chlorothalonil (Daconil), Myclobutanil (Eagle), Azoxystrobin (Heritage), Triadimefon (Bayleton), Trifloxystrobin (Compass), etc. A preventative treatment can be made during periods when

weather conditions are favorable for disease development. Scouting for disease development during these ideal periods is highly encouraged.



Non-Chemical Prevention

Since the pathogen causing brown patch survives in the thatch layer it is obvious that thatch control is of the utmost importance. To reduce thatch levels, use only recommended amounts of fertilizer and water. Also, proper mowing (sharp blades and correct mowing height) is very important in the prevention of this and most other diseases.

Related Information

If you feel that brown patch is affecting your turfgrass, please contact any of the following for help in selecting a proper fungicide for treatment: chemical dealer, lawn and garden center professional, county extension agent or pest control operator.