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## Summer Patch *Magnaporthe poae*

Summer Patch is a deadly disease, which affects the root system in the same spot year after year. It occurs mainly on Kentucky bluegrass and fine fescues. It can be most severe on Ky. bluegrass sod, since the sod is a mono-stand host of one species of grass. This is why a seeded mixture of different grasses perform best overall. The typical symptom is a circular patch or (frog eye). Circles may be noticeable when they are around 10" in size. They expand in time to two to three feet and may coalesce together. Since this is a root killing disease, the symptoms get worse as summer heat & drought progress. It can kill the turf down to bare ground. Weeds or resistant (mongrel) grasses will sometimes fill in the damaged areas.

On mild cases, applications of a systemic fungicide (Golden Eagle) at double rate may be effective. This fungicide is expensive and may not provide long-term answers. Usually when we see the lawn it is usually too late for fungicides.

The best long-term options are cultural ones:

**Maintain adequate fertility levels, especially on sod.**

**Irrigate to prevent drought stress.**

**Aerate to alleviate soil compaction and stimulate root development**

**Renovate and over-seed with resistant grasses.** Perennial Ryegrass and turf type Tall Fescue are totally resistant to this disease. This is the best long-term solution. Perennial rye can be seeded anytime. It is lighter green and more upright than the Ky. Bluegrass. Tall fescue is dark green and looks the most similar to KB. Tall fescue needs warmer soil temperature to germinate so it may not do well in a cool normal April.

Infected spots can be cultivated with a garden weasel or hook. Mix soil and seed in a pail. Apply the mix and level out with rake. Commercially we would use a slit seeder to renovate, de-thatch and slice the infected area. This will plant the seed down into the soil. In many cases this is done in a block fashion to mask the circles as best as possible.