

Controlling Dollarspot on Home Lawns

Dollarspot is the most widespread disease of turf-grasses in Alabama. Damage caused by this disease can be serious and is unsightly on well-maintained lawns, greens, and tees.

Bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, fine fescue, and bentgrass are all susceptible to dollarspot. This disease may also be found on centipedegrass, bahiagrass, and rarely on St. Augustinegrass. Dollarspot can be found at any-time during the growing season but is most commonly seen in late summer and early fall (Figure 1).

On closely mowed bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, or bentgrass, dollarspot appears as small, circular, tan-colored spots 1 to 2 inches in diameter. On coarser lawn grasses such as centipedegrass, spots are less distinct and somewhat larger than on fine-leaved turf-grasses. If left unchecked, these spots will grow together, forming large areas of blighted turf.

On individual diseased leaves, yellow spots appear. They later appear water soaked and finally turn tan. A distinct dark brown border always surrounds the spots on the leaves. Most often, spots appear first along the edge of a leaf and gradually expand in a broad band that may girdle the leaf blade.

The causal fungus, *Sclerotinia homoeocarpa*, survives as mycelium in diseased turfgrass leaves. It is spread mainly through the movement of diseased grass clippings by people, water, wind, and lawn mowers or other lawn care equipment (Figure 2).

The causal fungus usually invades the leaves but may also damage the crown, causing deep scars in the turf. Following a heavy dew, the white web-like mycelium of the fungus may be found on the diseased turf. This mycelium quickly disappears as the leaves dry. Mycelium of other fungi or small spider webs are often confused with the mycelium of this fungus.

Wet and mild conditions within the turf canopy favor growth of the fungus. Infection occurs when fungal mycelium comes into contact with a healthy leaf.

Dollarspot is more of a problem on drought-stressed turf. Lawns receiving adequate amounts of water are less susceptible to damage. Low cutting heights and low nitrogen fertility will increase the severity of dollarspot on zoysiagrass and bermudagrass. Fog, dew, or watering will provide enough moisture for the disease to develop.

Control Measures

Maintaining recommended nitrogen fertility levels for good turf growth is often an effective control for dollarspot. Excessive nitrogen fertility levels may lead to problems with brown patch on zoysiagrass, bentgrass, and fescue lawns.

Since moisture stress also favors dollarspot development, thorough but infrequent waterings will also help control this disease. Irrigate in the late morning to early afternoon or after midnight to reduce the time the foliage remains wet. Maintain recommended cutting



Figure 1. Typical dollarspot symptoms on zoysiagrass.



Figure 2. Web-like mycelium of dollarspot fungus on centipedegrass leaves. Note tan-colored spot on leaf.

heights and avoid scalping turf during periods of dry weather.

Use fungicides only on lawns where dollarspot causes serious damage year after year. For detailed fungicide recommendations for dollarspot control on home lawns, see Table 1. For a complete list of recommended fungicides, see Extension publication ANR-530, "Disease and

Insect Control for Commercial Turf" or ANR-500B "Alabama Pest Management Handbook—Volume 2."

For best results, begin fungicide applications as disease symptoms appear and make three to four additional applications. Apply fungicides with a hose proportioner or hand sprayer.

Table 1. Fungicides Registered for Controlling Dollarspot on Turfgrasses

| Product | Per 1,000 Sq. Ft. | Amount To Use Comments |
|--|--|---|
| chlorothalonil DACONIL 2787/BRAVO 40.4F DACONIL 2787 ULTREX ECHO 90DF THALONIL 4L | 3-11 fl. oz. 1.8-7.4 oz. 1.75-6.50 oz. 3.0-11 fl. oz. | Apply at 7- to 14-day intervals in 2 to 5 gal. of water per 1,000 sq. ft. before disease is seen. Shorten interval to 7 days and increase rate when disease appears. Golf course and sod farm use only. No residential use. |
| chlorothalonil + fenarimol BROADWAY 4.4F TWO SOME 4.4F | 3.0-4.5 fl. oz. 3.0-4.5 fl. oz. | Apply on a 14- to 21-day schedule. Shorten interval and increase rate when disease appears. |
| fenarimol RUBIGAN AS | 0.75-1.5 fl. oz. | Apply at 10- to 28-day intervals in 2 to 5 gal. of water per 1,000 sq. ft. Shorten interval when disease is present. |
| iprodione CHIPCO 26019 50W CHIPCO 26019 FLO | 1.5-2 oz. 3-4 fl. oz. | Apply at 22- to 28-day intervals in 2 to 5 gal. of water per 1,000 sq. ft.; apply every 14 to 21 days on tees and greens. No residential use. |
| propiconazole BANNER MAXX | 0.5-2.0 fl. oz. | Apply at 7- to 28-day intervals when conditions favor disease. |
| thiophanate-methyl FUNGO 50 50W* CLEARY'S 3336 50W* CLEARY'S 3336-F* Systec 1998-F | 1-2 oz. 1-2 oz. (4-8 Tbs.) 1-2 fl. oz. 1-2 fl. oz. | Apply at 5- to 14-day intervals in 5 gal. of water per 1,000 sq. ft. Shorten interval and increase rate when disease appears. Use on St. Augustinegrass, bermudagrass, and cool-season turfgrasses ONLY. |
| triadimefon BAYLETON 25W | 1-2 oz. (6-12 Tbs.) | Apply at 30-day intervals in 2 to 4 gal. of water per 1,000 sq. ft. When disease is present, use full rate; then reduce rate for subsequent applications. |
| myclobutanil Eagle 40W IMMUNOX | 0.5-1.2 oz. 14 fl. oz. | Apply at 14-day intervals in 1 to 3 gallons of water per 1,000 sq. ft. |

*Not cleared for use on zoysiagrass and centipedegrass.



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