

## Best Management Practices: Dollar Spot

### Description

Dollar spot is one of the more common diseases turfgrass managers face during the growing season. It is a foliar disease that impacts both warm and cool-season turfgrass around the world. All major cool-season turfgrass types can be infected by Dollar spot. Some turfgrass types are more susceptible to Dollar spot such as certain cultivars of creeping bentgrass or seashore paspalum. In addition to seashore paspalum, other warm-season turfgrass impacted are bermudagrass, zoysiagrass, and centipedegrass.



Depending on the turfgrass type and management segment (golf course, sports field or home lawn), Dollar spot can cause varying degrees of turfgrass damage from blighted, discolored leaf blades in home lawns to severe scarring on golf course putting greens. In these situations, Dollar spot can disrupt the overall aesthetics of turfgrass and have a negative impact on the playability of surfaces by causing detrimental scarring.

### Environmental Condition

The causal agent for dollar spot is *Sclerotinia homoeocarpa*. The overwintering structures (sclerotia and mycelium) of *Sclerotinia homoeocarpa* begin active growth when temperatures reach 55-60°F. Peak Dollar spot activity occurs when temperatures are 70 - 84°F with high nighttime humidity. Excessive thatch and decreased soil moisture may contribute to Dollar spot infestation. Turfgrass is more susceptible to Dollar spot under nitrogen deficiency. This disease can impact cool-season turfgrass throughout the growing season. For warm-season turfgrass, Dollar spot primarily occurs in spring or fall.

### Symptom and Identification

Dollar spot is a foliar disease causing blighting of leaf blades. Symptoms for this disease may look different depending upon mowing height. For higher cut turf, initial symptoms begin as small tan-colored lesions with red to maroon margins often



expanding across the leaf blade. In some cases, the lesions may have an hourglass appearance. Infected areas can range from 1-12 inches in diameter. In lower cut turf, symptoms first appear as circular tan spots approximately 1 inch in diameter. These spots can coalesce into larger infected areas. One of the telltale signs of Dollar spot is the presence of white mycelium on the leaf blades in the morning after heavy dew.



## Management

**Cultural:** If feasible, a turfgrass variety less susceptible to dollar spot should be selected. Nitrogen fertilization will aid in turf recovery by stimulating new leaf growth. Maintaining adequate fertility and proper irrigation throughout the growing season will produce a more vigorously growing turf. Cultural practices focusing on thatch management will reduce organic matter buildup as well as aid in decreasing Dollar spot severity.

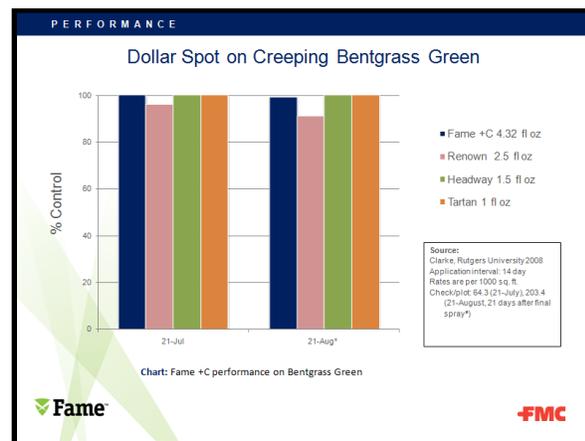
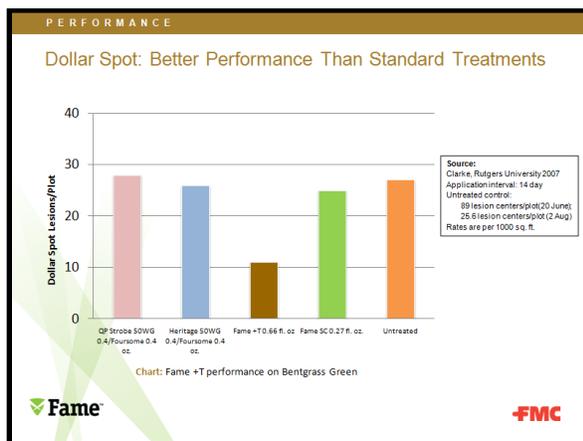
Reducing time of leaf wetness can minimize spread and Dollar spot development. Some ways of minimizing leaf wetness are: adjusting irrigation times to early morning, removing morning dew by mowing, dragging or rolling.

**Chemical:** Preventative applications are the most effective strategy for successful Dollar spot control. Under higher disease condition, shorter application intervals and higher fungicide rates should be used. It is important to use between 1 - 2 gal/1000 ft<sup>2</sup> spray volume for effective coverage. There are documented cases of fungicide resistance with Dollar spot. Designing a fungicide program that rotates modes-of-action will reduce the risk of resistance development. Fame fungicides are excellent options for Dollar spot control and resistance management.

**Fame™ +T and Fame™ +C** combine the effectiveness of fluoxastrobin and either tebuconazole or chlorothalonil to provide excellent Dollar spot control. Fame +T increases dollar spot control with the addition of tebuconazole. On the other hand, Fame +C combines a systemic and a contact fungicide for effective Dollar spot control.



Best Dollar spot control with Fame +T and Fame +C has been observed using 14-day application intervals.



## References

- A Practical Guide to Turfgrass Fungicides. R. Latin. 2011. The American Phytopathological Society. St. Paul, MN.
- The Turfgrass Disease Handbook. H.B. Couch. 2000. Krieger Publishing Co., Malabar, FL.
- Turf Diseases of the Great Lakes Region: Identification and control guide for golf courses, parks, and lawns. J.P. Kerns and P.L. Koch. 2011. Cooperative Extension of the University of Wisconsin-Extension. Cooperative Extension Publishing, Madison, WI.
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