# *Soil and Plant Laboratory, Inc.*

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PATHOLOGY TURFGRASS EXAMPLE REPORT

## BACKGROUND

A sample was received for disease diagnosis. The sample represented the outskirts of a dead patch of bermudagrass with symptoms sporadically occurring across the field.

## PATHOLOGY RESULTS

Microscopic examination of the stolons and crown region revealed the fungus *Ophiospharella korrae*, commonly known as "Spring Dead Spot".

## DISCUSSION

Spring dead spot initially infects new tender tissue in later summer or fall and then survives in thatch and root debris continuing to kill the affected tissue. Symptomatic regions are evident when bermudagrass emerges from dormancy in early spring often in patches 6-12 inches in diameter.

Prevention is the best control. In the late summer and fall minimize nitrogen fertilizations that push new fleshy growth and adjust the mowing height to cut higher so plenty of surface area remains to minimize pre-dormancy stress. Maintain adequate potassium nutrition and supplement especially in the fall to improve root health for winter hardiness.

Management is best relied upon proper cultural practices in conjunction with fungicides. Checking fertility at this time may provide some beneficial information relative to nutritional levels and improvements would be welcomed moving into the summer drought stress season. At this time applying a fungicide such that it penetrates the rootzone may provide some relief relative to the disease progressing into the neighboring turfgrass areas. Application of a preventative treatment in the fall may still be appropriate. See www.ipm.ucdavis for specific controls.

Aesthetic concerns may be remedied by raking out the dead bermudagrass and reseeding or planting stolons. Determining the nutrition of these areas and supplementing them prior to re-planting may improve their establishment and resistance to the fungus.