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Soybean Seedling Disease Potential

Annual losses from soybean seedling blights are *not* the greatest disease yield robbers in our soybean production system (Soybean Cyst Nematode tops that list). Yet almost every year, we see *some* loss from seedling diseases like Pythium or Phytophthora. They might not be visible save for some ‘hot’ spots here and there, but if conditions are right, stand/yield losses can result.

When do we see problems? Wet weather soon after planting increases the incidence of disease pressures. We haven’t had to worry about that much this spring, but if this last storm ‘dumped’ on some of your fields, issues could arise. Compacted or poorly drained soils are also hot spots, as are areas where seedlings aren’t growing well for some reason (herbicide, etc....).

Fusarium is often associated with stressed plants. Rhizoctonia has a wide range of infection conditions, but is common when we have warm and moist (not saturated) soil conditions. Phytophthora is also an issue with warm/wet soils. Pythium prefers high soil moistures, especially poorly drained soils and flooded areas.

Sometimes, seedling blights go unnoticed. There might be part of a row missing here or a patch over there. Other times, they can be significant. If you have the latter, consider confirming the disease via a sample to the KSU Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab. With an appropriate ID in place, you can start managing seeding dates, seed treatments, and other field level factors to keep seedling diseases, and they losses they cause, from being a bigger issue than they need to be.

Orchardgrass in Cool Season Turf

As I looked down walking across some turf last week, I noted the lighter green color and rapidly growing foliage of orchardgrass. It doesn’t seem like much of a problem at first, but it *does* look just enough different it is not welcomed by most turf owners.

The positives of orchardgrass stop with: it’s a bunch grass and doesn’t spread badly. Outside of that, most of its attributes aren’t good.

It often comes in contaminated grass seed – but isn’t listed as a ‘weed seed’ because it’s a pasture grass. Make sure you try to get grass seed that is zero percent other crop seed, or orchardgrass may start to show up.

There are no herbicides control options that won’t also kill desirable turf species. Spot treating clumps with glyphosate products (always read and follow label directions...) can work so long as you understand any desirable green turf you hit will also be killed. After killed spots have turned brown, cut out the dead clumps and replace with a small piece of sod. If areas are too large to replace, it may be more practical to kill the entire lawn and start over in the fall.

Need a good ID? Check out http://kswildflower.org/grass_details.php?grassID=15 .

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Does Your Body Feel Stiff?

Feeling stiffness in your body is a common complaint, especially as you age. Stiffness can be a result of doing heavy activity that you are not used to or from being inactive for periods of time. It can also be caused by poor posture or medical conditions. Here is a closer look at causes of stiffness and ways to cope.

1. **Heavy activity.** When you do strengthening exercises, or perform heavy labor that you are not used to, your muscles strengthening process and you may feel stiff and sore for 1 to 2 days as the body repairs itself.
2. **Inactivity.** You can feel stiffness because you have been inactive. Synovial fluid is a thick liquid located between your joints, and when you move around during the day this liquid lubricates your joints. When you stop moving to sleep or when you sit for long periods of time, the fluid doesn't secrete as much to facilitate joint and bone movement.
3. **Poor posture.** Sitting or standing for long periods of time and holding your body in a way that places strain on muscles, tendons, and ligaments can leave you feeling stiff and sore.
4. **Medical conditions.** Rheumatoid arthritis, Lyme disease, thyroid disease, strains, sprains, and possibly low levels of vitamin D are all medical conditions that can cause you to feel stiff. If you think your feelings of stiffness could be due to a medical cause, seek medical attention.

Here are some ways to prevent and treat feelings of stiffness cause by situations other than a medical condition.

*Warm up your muscles before physical activity. Sometimes, the feeling of stiffness is inevitable and part of the muscle repair process that allows you to get stronger, but a good warm up can certainly help.

*Take mobility breaks throughout the day. Set a timer and get up and move for about 5 minutes every hour to help increase the secretions of joint fluid and prevent stiffness.

*Continue to be active. Even though heavy exercise can lead to stiffness, it can also help reduce it. Exercise can help reduce inflammation, increase the secretion of synovial fluid to lubricate your joints, and helps build muscles that support good posture.

*Take recovery days when you need to. If you have a day of heavy activity and are feeling stiff and sore later, try light cardio activities like swimming, walking, or cycling.

*Check your posture, always. Adjust your work space, if needed, so your head, neck, torso and legs are aligned, and keep your computer at eye level with feet flat on the floor.

*Stretch and increase mobility. Any stretching can be beneficial and stretches should be done every day. Stretching is most beneficial when muscles are already warm, so make sure you do some type of warm up activity first.

Source: K-State Research and Extension, Walk Kansas newsletter, "Lifestyle for A Healthy Mind", Week six.