



K-State turf: August 5 2008

After a string of days with temps > 100 F the 90-degree weather today in Manhattan is downright pleasant. Our turf is still suffering, though. The greens at our research facility required some TLC over the weekend with the crew taking turns with hand-watering (thanks, guys) and I know we weren't the only ones in that predicament, based on the calls rolling in. If you want to see turf under stress and turf that is kicking back and relaxing, be sure to come out to the field day on Thursday. You can take notes on what is brown and what is green, and how to skew things towards the latter.

Samples this week have been the usual summer suspects: Pythium blight in ryegrass, brown patch in fescue as well as in creeping bentgrass putting greens. This is the time of year when summer patch will be visible in Kentucky bluegrass though I haven't seen it myself this past week or so.

Then, there are the NON diseases, ie stress. I already sent some info about how turfgrasses shut down root and shoot growth at different temps. Another abiotic factor to look for is localized dry spot (LDS) in putting greens. With LDS, the soil becomes hydrophobic (soil-repellent). The turf may appear bluish, then begin to wilt. In addition, areas with LDS sometimes lack dew in the mornings.

To check for LDS, you can do the classic water-droplet test. Take a soil core and look at the profile. In areas with LDS the soil will be very dry. Take a core from a healthy area to compare. Put small drop of water onto the cores. I did this test this morning at our research center (see photo). With LDS, the drop just sits there and doesn't get absorbed.



Water droplet sits there and does not get absorbed.



Brown patch in tall fescue, a common sight these days.

Watering for dry spots and cooling:

Below are two short articles on syringing to keep turf cool. The first is from Karl Dannenberger (Ohio State University) showing the impact of syringing, the second from David Kopec (University of Arizona) discussing syringing vs. handwatering.

<http://www.turfgrasstrends.com/turfgrasstrends/article/articleDetail.jsp?id=99488>

<http://ag.arizona.edu/turf/ccps699.htm>

Weather summary for July 30 to August 4, 2008:

| Weather Station | Ave max air temp | Ave min air temp | Ave RH | Ave soil temp, 4" |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Manhattan | 92.6 | 69.3 | 72.3 | 82.0 |
| Colby | 93.9 | 65.3 | 61.7 | 80.4 |
| Hesston | 96.1 | 69.7 | 80.0 | 83.5 |
| Garden City | 99.9 | 65.0 | 84.6 | 83.5 |
| Ottawa | 92.5 | 71.8 | 78.5 | 81.6 |