



K-State turf: March 23 2009

1) Greening up?

I caught part of the joint meeting of the Kansas Golf Course Superintendents Association and the Heart of America Golf Course Superintendents Association here in Manhattan today.

One of the hot topics was definitely, "*How is your grass greening up?*" That is a question for lawn and landscape turf, too.

It sounded like there was a lot of variability, with some people seeing a lot of green, and some people with less, depending on local climate, location in Kansas, plus fertility practices. In some sites, there's even a hint of green coming along in zoysiagrass but we'll see how that holds up with cold temperatures in the forecast for the weekend.

I heard several people from around the state say things that echoed my own feelings:

"The warm weather is nice, but I'm not ready for all the work of the growing season!"

2) Desiccation

This has been a dry winter in many areas, and turfgrass may have suffered some desiccation injury. Areas with a thatch build-up are particularly prone to winter desiccation. For example, I had a sample last spring of a Kentucky bluegrass lawn with more than an inch of thatch. When thatch builds up, the crown (living tissue) is raised above the ground, leaving it more exposed to drying winds as well as temperature fluctuations. See the images on the next page.

There is information on thatch management here:

<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf2131.pdf>



Kentucky bluegrass lawn with a thick layer of thatch. The sample was sent in during April 2008, with the question, “Why isn’t my lawn greening up?”

3) Revisit our online resources

There is a lot of information available at www.ksuturf.com. On the lefthand side of the page, check out the link for Publications.

Under Homeowners, you’ll find information on how to care for different types of lawns. And, though it says “homeowners” a lot of the information should be helpful for commercial turfgrass managers, too.

4) Fairy ring

Just for your viewing pleasure, here's a photo of some early-season fairy ring at our research facility here at KSU. The fairy rings are really standing out against the still-dormant turf.



5) Pine diseases

Time for the annual reminder to cut down and destroy trees infested with pine wilt. And, if you have pine tip blight or Dothistroma needle cast you should be thinking about those fairly soon.

For an overview of pine diseases in Kansas, how to diagnose them, how to tell them apart, and how to manage them, check out this page:

<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library/plant2/1722.pdf>