



Bayer

Turf nutrition

With the summer playing season well underway, the potential for disease on greens and sports pitches, at this time of year should still be on a greenkeeper's and groundsman's radar.

Turf diseases such as Anthracnose and Red Thread are a classic result of nitrogen deficiency. While applying a fertiliser may seem the obvious answer, it's important to highlight that applications of a nitrogen based fertiliser will potentially slow playing surfaces up – something greenkeepers are keen to avoid on putting greens.

Nitrogen deficiency in the soil results in poor growth and reduces the grass sward's ability to recover, making it more susceptible to these potential disease threats. Turf managers should monitor the amount of grass clippings they are removing at each cut, as this is a key indicator of the nutritional status of the grass sward. A reduction in the amount of clippings being removed from the mower box after each cut highlights that available nitrogen in the rootzone has declined and needs to be addressed.

Fertilisers stimulate more growth during the day and this faster growing grass will slow the ball. If a tournament fixture is approaching, a completely cultural approach to tackling the disease threat may not be desirable, in which case it would be preferable to use a fungicide. A good broad spectrum fungicide, such as Interface® will offer protection from both these summer diseases, and when used in rotation with a fungicide that has a different active ingredient, good disease resistance management is achieved as part of an Integrated Disease Management (IDM) approach.

Interface® can be used at any time of the year, so it's a good staple and is approved for the control of six of the most common turf diseases, including Red Thread and Anthracnose. Its innovative StressGard™ Formulation Technology also boosts the turf's defences in high stress conditions.

As with any time of year, an integrated approach is the best option to controlling turf disease; one that includes both cultural practices and chemical control. However the specific challenges that summer imposes means that a fungicide solution may be preferable at peak times of the playing season.

