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TUESDAY, 26 JUNE 2018

Growth Rate and Plant Health Hypothetically speaking....



Place looks better in late June than it did in May. Gotta love January!

In my [last post](#) I wondered if I could use indicator species to help me grow my grass at the right rate. This is only a hypothesis but is what I have been trying for the past few seasons and it seems to work from what I've seen. Either way, it's not fact and could be total bullshit.

I wonder through, hypothetically speaking, if grass is healthiest (has the least amount of disease) when it's growing at the appropriate speed for the climatic conditions, what are the consequences of, say,

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using preventative fungicides and growing the grass at the less than optimal rate? (because hypothetically speaking the only way to truly grow the grass at the right speed is by not applying preventative fungicides and seeing the disease)

The more I think about it (if my thinking and observations are true) the only real way to truly achieve the optimal growth rate for plant health (again, less disease) is to use the actual diseases to help you fine tune things. So if this is true (not likely) then what kinds of other issues are we going to get if we mask the diseases with regular fungicide applications?

I'm building hypothesis on top of hypothesis here so this is so far fetched it's not even funny.

Also understand that what I'm trying here is to grow grass without any fungicides, organic or synthetic because **I'm not convinced organic is any better than other ways of managing turf**. It's all shit! (just kidding)

Is this (sub-optimal growth rate) one of the reasons some people experience major disease outbreaks as the previously applied fungicide wears off?



Mike Huck @IrrTurfSvcs · Jun 22, 2018



Really? fox13news.com/news/local-new...



Lawns can become 'addicted' to pesticide and fertilizer, ...

Relying on fertilizers and pesticides to keep your yard looking green comes with a price. Some lawn care experts say a yard
fox13news.com



Paul Koch

@uwpaul

We have submitted a couple grant proposals to see whether fungicide-treated soils are less resistant to pathogen invasion once you take away the fungicide, a form of addiction I suppose. No one has thought them interesting enough to fund quite yet.

♥ 19 4:08 PM - Jun 22, 2018

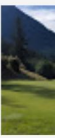


[See Paul Koch's other Tweets](#)



I know that's probably what I used to observe back when I used a lot of fungicide and had poorly timed fertilizer applications. I applied most of my nitrogen in the spring and fall as the "classic" cool season

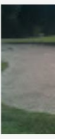
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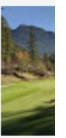
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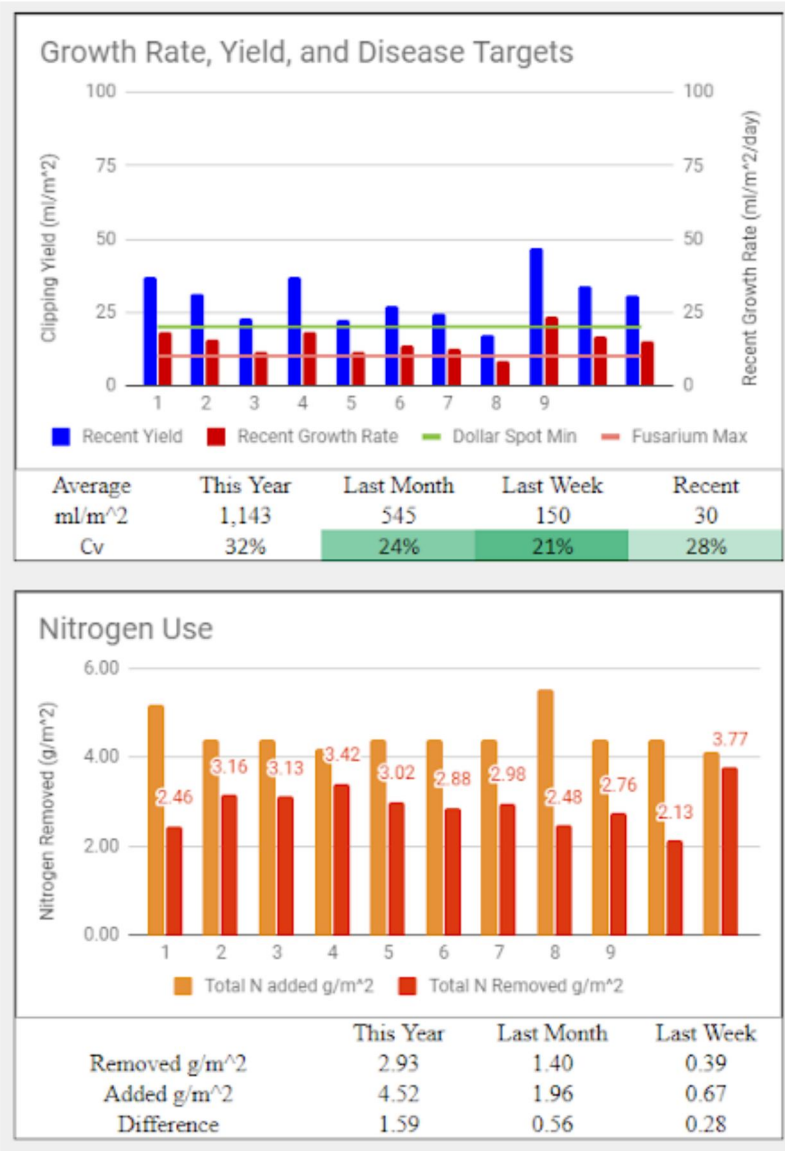
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growth curve suggested I do. I was growing my grass the fastest when my fusarium and growth potential curve were suggesting I grow it slower. In the summer months I was growing the grass slowly when the dollar spot and growth potential curve were suggesting I grow it faster (for my climate anyway). It's no wonder I would get absolutely hammered with disease when I managed my turf this way. I was chasing my tail and putting out fires left and right! Maybe it's not directly a result of the fungicide killing of beneficial organisms as some would suggest, but a combination of that and grass that is growing at the wrong rate. Who the hell knows eh?



The 8th green is growing too slow and has the most dollar spot so I have it some extra nitrogen today.



Dollar spot on the 8th. Interesting how it seems to be on the margin of the bentgrass patch.

It's also no wonder why we had so much poa on our greens because we were constantly killing our grass and the only thing that was saving our ass was the constant supply of poa seed.

What about thatch? Thatch relies on the soil microorganisms to break it down otherwise we are left to physically dilute or remove it through mechanical means. If we are matching growth rates to the soil/plant biology then perhaps we can eliminate or reduce the inevitable organic matter buildup in our soils?

What about plant health in general? The plants ability to be healthy and tolerate traffic and stay nice and dense and competitive? Lucky for me most of our traffic comes at times of the year where growth rates are the highest. It's almost like the ideal conditions for golf are also the ideal conditions for grass growth.

Of course there are going to be times when you need to grow the grass at a rate that will make disease worse. Clubs with high amounts of traffic in the winter months where the grass hardly grows and courses that absolutely need slow growing grass for tournaments in the summer months. I don't think there's any getting around those situations but thankfully most lower end clubs don't have those pressures.

Boy would I love to see some solid research on this.

Clearly I've been thinking too hard.

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We have never done less or spent less on our greens

Posted by [Jason Haines](#)



Labels: [#clipvol](#), [Turf disease](#)

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