



Kikuyu Yellows Fact Sheet

What is Kikuyu yellows?

Kikuyu yellows is the main problem likely to strike Kikuyu turf in warm moist climates. Kikuyu yellows is caused by the fungal disease *Verrucalvus flavofaciens* and is the primary disease of turf and pasture types of kikuyu.

This fungal disease attacks the root system by causing a root rot and can in severe cases cause dead of patches of turf. This disease loves real wet soils so tends to be a problem after long periods of rain. The first signs of the disease is normally a distinct yellowing of patches of the turf. In more severe infestations these yellow patches become circular and may even die. Even if the turf does not die it will become more susceptible to weed infestation in the weakened centre of the affected patches. Sometimes the disease will show up a week or 2 after we weather if the ground does dry out making diagnosis more difficult. The images below are typical of the disease and were taken after a week of very humid and fairly wet weather (125mm rain in the 7days).



There are no easy methods to control this disease. (no fungicides registered for home use). However my recommendations are to

- Apply a complete slow release or controlled release fertiliser to encourage re-growth
- Prepare to control weeds in affected lawns over the coming months
- Look to improve drainage by aerating lawns with a fork or coring machine. This disease is much more prevalent in waterlogged soil
- The other alternative is to let nature take its course and rely on sunny weather returning and the natural resilience of kikuyu repair itself over the coming months.