



PEST AND DISEASE PROBLEMS

Dr Ruth Mann, STRI, writes about the Top 10 pest and disease problems in 2002

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Telephone enquiries to STRI's pest and disease helpline increased during 2002 and we thought it may be of interest to look at the problems that people required advice on.

Topping the list with over half the enquiries were chafer grubs (**Fig 1**). Enquiries came from all types of grassland – golf, parks, caravan sites, lawns, crematoriums and especially sites on sandy rootzones. Queries on chafers ranged from – What chemical will control them? (none at present) to – Will they harm my children when they are playing in the garden? (no, they are packed full of protein which is why the birds and badgers love them. I've decided that if I could get Jamie Olivier to come up with a recipe we could make a fortune!).

Pests in general seemed to cause the most problems last year. Leatherjacket damage was quite widespread and many people believed they had found a new species that had larvae hatching in spring and adult crane fly present all summer. *Tipula paludosa* is our most common species of crane fly but there are others such as *T. oleracea* which tends to be on the wing all summer. This second species may just be becoming more numerous.

Nematode problems also featured at the top end of the list. Queries on red thread mostly consisted of symptoms that were not relieved by nitrogen application in Southern England and advice on chemical control was required.

Other enquiries included advice on fever fly identification and control, fusarium patch control (especially integrated disease management) and squidge control. We also had requests to provide information on pearlwort, ants, lichen, anthracnose and general basidiomycetes.

Top 10 pest and disease problems in 2002

- 1 Chafers
- 2 Leatherjackets
- 3 Nematodes
- 4 Fever fly
- 5 Red thread
- 6 Fusarium patch
- 7 Squidge
- 8 Anthracnose
- 9 Dog lichen
- 10 Pearlwort



Fig 1: The chafer grub – top of the list of pest and disease enquiries to STRI in 2002.

Pesticide Mixing

The Pesticide Safety Directorate has issued a reminder of the legalities of pesticide mixing, following reports of the alleged purchase of non-approved mixed formulation. These pesticide mixtures are mainly amenity herbicides used on golf courses and bowling greens.

A mixed formulation is one where two pesticides or a pesticide and another compound are mixed together. Mixed products can only be sold **if** they have an approval for sale, supply, storage and use. Where there is no such approval, anyone who stores or uses these products is likely to be in breach of regulation 4 of the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 or regulation 4 of the Plant Protection Products (Basic Conditions) Regulations 1997, as they would be storing or using an illegal pesticide.

Some pesticide distributors may offer a pesticide mixing service. Purchasers using these services should ensure that any mixtures offered to them are only mixed **after sale** and that only sufficient quantity for immediate use is purchased. They should not be purchased in bulk and stored. Storing mixtures for unnecessarily long periods may also be in breach of health and safety legislation in general.

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(For a free download of Dr Mann's approved turfgrass fungicides see:

<http://www.stri.co.uk/research/free-download-dr-ruth-mann-approved-turfgrass-fungicides/>)

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