



New year, new way to treat fairways

Launch of a versatile SDHI fungicide will give superintendents another option for managing foliar diseases.

By **Rob Thomas**

Dollar spot, brown patch, Microdochium patch and other foliar diseases have been put on notice. For superintendents in search of an efficient, effective control of these maladies, Bayer has introduced Exteris Stressgard.

Utilizing a next-generation succinate dehydrogenase inhibitor (SDHI) mode of action, Exteris Stressgard combines fluopyram, a new active ingredient for the turf and ornamentals market, with a proven QoI partner, trifloxystrobin, and unique formulation technology to introduce a stronger tool for foliar disease management.

According to Bayer, fluopyram and trifloxystrobin were combined and then formulated specifically to manage foliar disease in a way the market has not seen, thanks to new Leaf-Cote Technology. As the name suggests, Leaf-Cote Technology is a formulation enhancement that ensures significantly more product retention on

the leaf surface than traditional fungicides, sticking to the leaf where it's needed most – at the site of fungal activity.

Additional benefits include reduction in dry time and shortening of the leaf wetness period, providing benefits such as a frost and dew mitigation under certain conditions.

Laurence Mudge, Bayer Green Solutions Team manager, sees this product taking turfgrass care to another level.

“Exteris Stressgard is an excellent fairway fungicide,” Mudge says. “With broad-spectrum foliar disease control – preventative and curative – and unique formulation enhancements with Leaf-Cote Technology and Stressgard Formulation Technology, this product is going to set a higher bar for foliar disease control on fairways.”

Dr. Rob Golembiewski, a member of the Bayer Green Solutions Team, concurs with Mudge's assessment.

“Exteris Stressgard is a new kind of fungicide that the turf market hasn't seen before,” Golembiewski says. “The innovation with Leaf-Cote Technology brings a unique offering for a fairway product.

“More money is spent on fungicides to control dollar spot than on any other turf disease,” he adds. “Exteris Stressgard provides excellent control of dollar spot along with brown patch, leaf spot and other foliar diseases.”

Todd Hicks, program coordinator in the Department of Horticulture and Crop Science at The Ohio State University, has been looking, specifically, at how Exteris Stressgard works on dollar spot. “It seems to be fantastic in the fight against dollar spot,” he says. “Bayer has

a very strong line to begin with and early signs have been very positive – both preventative and curative.”

From the East Coast and Midwest, through the Transition Zone and into the South, Hicks refers to dollar spot as “one of the most ubiquitous and most sprayed for diseases in golf,” adding to the anticipation of Exteris Stressgard.

INNOVATION

Fluopyram is the first and only SDHI of its kind, with the ability – depending on how it is formulated – to provide benefits unlike any other product on the market, Bayer says. When combining this unique active ingredient with a proven QoI partner, trifloxystrobin, Stressgard Formulation Technology, and new proprietary Leaf-Cote Technology, Bayer created a new fungicide designed to be the best foliar disease specialist available for fairways.

“SDHIs are on the verge of becoming the largest class of fungicides in golf course management,” Mudge says. “Unlike DMI or QoI fungicides, which are all very similar, SDHIs are radically different from one another – and fluopyram is unique. It's special. There's a lot to be excited about with fluopyram.”

“If you look at all the SDHIs currently on the market, you would see that fluopyram is in its own chemical group,” Golembiewski adds. “There's no other SDHI like it.”

Exteris Stressgard's bonding capabilities are second to none.

“Exteris has been formulated for optimal foliar disease control through improved leaf surface adhesion – that's the

Exteris Stressgard's Key Benefits

- A new mode of action that offers preventative and curative control of tough foliar diseases, including dollar spot, brown patch, Microdochium patch and leaf spots
- Enhanced leaf coverage and improved product retention on the leaf surface means faster activity and improved control
- Flexibility of application rates, timing and conditions that fit within current preventative and curative programs
- Improved dry time, which ensures quicker rainfastness
- Dew and frost mitigation properties under certain conditions that offer labor efficiencies

dollar spot and brown patch, and high turfgrass quality well into late August. The impressive residual dollar spot control (28+ days) indicates Exteris is a good candidate for final ‘put dollar spot to bed’ applications in the fall. As we learn more about the chemistry, I'm curious to see its potential use for control of soilborne diseases.”

AVAILABILITY

Exteris Stressgard received federal registration with the EPA in July 2016 and is registered in all states except for California, New York and South Dakota. It will launch at the Golf Industry Show the week of Feb. 6 with purchases from authorized agents on March 1.

EXPECTATIONS

“Exteris Stressgard is going to raise the bar and set the new standard for foliar disease management in fairways,” Mudge says. “It offers excellent control of dollar spot as well as other major foliar diseases and is packaged with unique formulation technology. There are lots of great fungicides out there, but with Exteris Stressgard, we have a superior, high-performing product that really has the whole package.”

And superintendents aren't going to be handcuffed, waiting for the calendar to change, according to Golembiewski.

“While many SDHIs are targeted toward spring or fall applications, we see the biggest benefit for supers in applying Exteris Stressgard throughout the year during peak disease pressure periods,” he says. **GCI**

Cleveland-based writer Rob Thomas is a frequent GCI contributor.