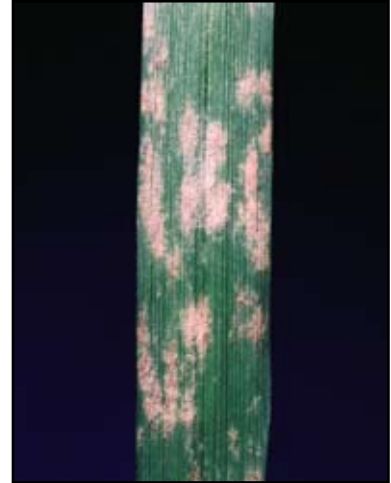


Powdery mildew and ramularia leaf spot

Powdery mildew

- Summary** Powdery mildew (PM) is caused by the fungus *Erysiphe graminis*. It usually occurs in spring and autumn and is only a problem under heavy infection.
- Species affected** Perennial ryegrass, tall fescue, cocksfoot.
- Identification** PM causes patches of fine, white-coloured fungus (mycelium) on leaves and leaf sheaths. Older patches appear fluffy with black pinhead sized fruiting bodies. Older leaves are infected before younger leaves and can turn yellow and die under heavy infection.
- Spread** PM survives winter as a fungus on infected plants, stubble or hay. Air-borne spores produced in spring land on susceptible plants, causing new infections. Spores are also released after rain in autumn. Infection is worst in shaded areas with poor air circulation.
- Prevention and management** Graze pasture to remove affected growth and promote fresh regrowth.



Powdery mildew on a ryegrass leaf.

Ramularia leaf spot

- Summary** The fungus *Ramularia pusilla* causes Ramularia leaf spot (RLS), most commonly in spring and autumn, when it can seriously reduce yield and quality.
- Species affected** Ryegrass, prairie grass.
- Identification** Rounded leaf spots, grey to brown in colour, sometimes with red edges, appear on the leaf surface. Part of a paddock can appear yellow as infected leaves become yellow and die.
- Spread** Numerous small, egg-shaped spores are produced on older lesions. These spores are readily wind borne and can rapidly spread infection to new sites. The spread of RLS is favoured by wet, humid weather.
- Prevention and management** Pasture should be grazed before becoming long and rank, to reduce the chance of RLS becoming established and lower the severity of the disease. Under serious infection, fungicides may be economical.



Ramularia leaf spot on ryegrass leaves.