

Scald and snow mould

Scald

Summary	Scald, caused by the fungus <i>Rhynchosporium orthosporum</i> , typically occurs April-October, from Manawatu and Hawkes Bay south.
Species affected	Ryegrass, cocksfoot.
Identification	Scald causes irregularly shaped lesions or scald-like blotches on leaves and leaf sheaths. These are brown-grey in colour, often appearing grey with brown edges. Lesions can join to affect most of the leaf. Infected leaves often die from the tip down; heavily infected plants are unpalatable to stock.
Spread	Spores produced on dead leaves are splashed, blown or carried to new leaves. The disease then persists in cool, sheltered areas. It is most severe during cool, wet periods in early spring and autumn.
Prevention and management	Sow resistant ryegrass varieties. All Agriseeds varieties have good resistance to scald. If the disease is noted in winter conserved feed, timely grazing can reduce losses.



Scald on ryegrass leaves.

Snow mould

Summary	Snow mould is a rare but serious disease, caused by the fungus <i>Monographella nivalis</i> (asexual phase - <i>Microdochium nivale</i> or <i>Fusarium nivale</i>). It can be a problem in establishing autumn sown pasture following cereals. Long, rank swards can also become infected in winter, especially under snow.
Species affected	Ryegrass, brome grasses.
Identification	Plants begin to die from infection in the crown. Leaves become infected with large, dark lesions that quickly kill the whole blade.
Spread	Masses of spores are produced on infected leaves and crowns. The fungus can survive in soil and on debris, especially that of infected cereals, for many months.
Prevention and management	Avoid pasture becoming long and rank in winter. Do not drill autumn sown pasture where cereal crops are known to be infected with snow mould (where it produces crown, leaf and head blights).



Snow mould in Italian ryegrass.