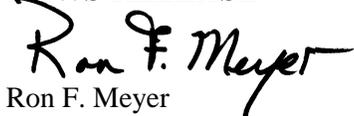


NEWS RELEASE



Ron F. Meyer
Area Extension Agent
(Agronomy)



Golden Plains Area

Kit Carson County
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Seedling Diseases

Planting into soils that won't warm, can lead to stressed seedlings and the development of seedling diseases and thin stands when soil conditions are less than optimal. In particular, cool (especially less than 50° F) and/or wet conditions are especially conducive to the development of several seedling diseases.

Common Seedling Diseases

Seedling diseases can be caused by any of several common soil-borne organisms, such as Pythium, Fusarium, Rhizoctonia or plant parasitic nematodes. Seedling diseases have similar symptoms, often making diagnosis difficult.

Microscopic examination and other laboratory analyses of the diseased seedlings are often necessary to identify the cause of the problem and differentiate damage from disease, insect injury, herbicide damage, planting problems, or environmental stresses that often have similar symptoms.

Symptoms of seedling disease include:

- Rotted seed prior to germination
- Rotted or discolored seedlings after germination prior to emergence
- Post-emergence seedling damping off
- Root decay

Almost all seed corn is treated with more than one seed treatment fungicide, often an insecticide, and, this year, sometimes an optional nematicide. These products can provide protection against most of the pathogens that cause seedling diseases. But, in spite of their activity, diseases may still develop, such as during extended periods of inclement weather or under severe pathogen pressure. You can minimize the likelihood of developing seedling diseases by planting high quality corn seed at appropriate planting depths and soil conditions.

SOURCE: Tamra Jackson, UN Extension Plant Pathologist

Washington County
181 Birch Ave
Courthouse Annex
Akron, CO 80720
(970) 345-2287

Kit Carson County
251 16th Street, Suite 101
Burlington, CO 80807
(719) 346-5571

Phillips County
127 E. Denver
P.O. Box 328
Holyoke, CO 80734
(970) 854-3616

Yuma County
310 Ash, Suite B
County Courthouse
Wray, CO 80758
(970) 332-4151

Sedgwick County
315 Cedar
County Courthouse
Julesburg, CO 80737
(970) 474-3479

<http://goldenplains.colostate.edu>