

Nematodes – Controlling Lawn Pests Naturally

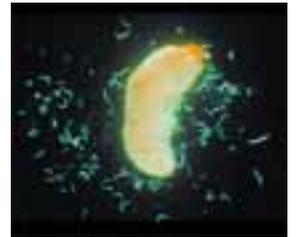
Nematodes are naturally occurring, microscopic worms that are applied to lawns for control of major turf and garden pests. They infest and kill their prey within 24 – 48 hours and continue to reproduce, with the young seeking out new pests to infest. Nematodes can be purchased at your local nursery.

What are they used for?

Certain species of nematodes target certain pests. Depending on which kind of nematode you buy, they are used to control pests such as:

- Grubs (the larva of the June Beetle, European Chafer or Japanese Beetle)
- Leatherjackets (the larvae of European Crane Flies)

It is important to diagnose the problem accurately before deciding on a specific course of action since dog spots, over fertilization and diseases can all create the tell-tale brown patches on your lawn.



Nematodes attacking grub
Source: Becker Underwood Inc.

When do I apply nematodes?

Timing is very important. Apply nematodes as soon as possible after purchase during rainy, overcast weather. Nematodes are sensitive to sunlight and temperatures below 13°C or above 35°C. More than one application of nematodes may be required for when soil conditions are not ideal for nematode survival. (Tip: Aerate your lawn before the application as this will help nematodes enter the soil).

Apply when insects are actively feeding, usually in late April/early May until late June (depending on which species of grub) and again from mid August through September. Late summer, early fall is the best time to apply nematodes, as this is when the larvae are most vulnerable - they are small, thin skinned and near the surface feeding on grass roots.

How do I apply nematodes?

Before applying the nematodes, water your lawn thoroughly (or apply them during/after a rainfall).

- Nematodes are stored on a damp sponge. Rinse the nematodes from the supplied sponge into a small amount of cool water which becomes a concentrated solution of nematodes.
- The nematodes are distributed over the lawn using a hose-end sprayer or by diluting them with more water and using a pump spray, watering can or pail. They will gradually settle in standing water, so agitation of the container is necessary as you apply them.
- Keep your lawn moist for 10 days after applying.

Always follow label instructions carefully and keep refrigerated until use.

For more information, please call 905-477-5530 or visit www.markham.ca

Sources:

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