



Cornmeal for Disease & Algae Control

Got yellow leaves on your photinia, brown patch in your St. Augustine grass or algae in your pond or water feature? You don't have to use toxic chemicals like the synthetic fungicides or heavy metal products like copper sulfate. There's a terrific solution to these problems that is totally natural. Cornmeal – and it's now available from the garden centers and feed stores in 25 pound bags. Cornmeal controls diseases better than any of the toxic chemical pesticides.

DISEASE CONTROL - Use cornmeal for root or soil borne fungus problems at 10-20 pounds per 1,000 square feet. Cornmeal works as a disease fighter in the soil by providing and stimulating existing beneficial microorganisms that feed on pathogens such as rhizoctonia, better known as brown patch in St. Augustine. Cornmeal at about two pounds per one hundred square feet also works on seedlings to prevent damping off, also on any other soil borne fungal diseases on both food and ornamental crops. One application may be all that is needed, but multiple applications are okay if necessary because cornmeal serves as a mild organic fertilizer and soil builder. The cornmeal needs moisture to activate. Rain won't hurt cornmeal's efficacy because, like all organic products, it is not water soluble.

ALGAE CONTROL - For floating paint-like and filamentous algae in water, use cornmeal at 5 pounds per 1,000 square feet or 150-200 pounds per surface acre. The cellulose in the cornmeal helps to tie up the excess phosphorous in water, balances the water chemistry and thus kills off the algae. The organic carbon in the cornmeal enables the beneficial bacteria in the water to flourish at the expense of the algae. Then the decomposing algae provide a source of carbon for the bacteria. One or two treatments is usually enough to control the algae for several months.

Caution: any fast algae kill from any product can cause an oxygen deprivation and result in fish kill.

Additional information can be obtained from the following publications:

Cornmeal – it's not just hog feed anymore, *The Peanut Farmer*, May 1996.

Aquaculture Engineering 9 (1990) 175-186.

P.S. Cornmeal only works in an organic program. When toxic chemical products are used, the effect of the cornmeal will be lost.