

What are ENDOPHYTES?

Helpful fungi

Endophytic fungi are another weapon against lawn insects. Endophytes are naturally occurring fungi that live within some grasses in a symbiotic relationship. The grass is a source of food for the endophytes, but rather than harming the grass, they benefit it. While an endophyte lives and grows, it produces chemicals that repel insects such as bill bugs and sod webworms.

Grass breeders have learned to breed grasses containing endophytes. Several endophyte-enhanced grasses are on the market, including varieties of creeping red fescue, chewings fescue, perennial ryegrass, and tall fescue. To find one, look for endophyte on the seed label. More grass varieties may follow as interest in this approach increases.