

Pasture Pests:

Grass Grub (*Costelytra Zealandica*) White

Information Sheet

Identification.

Grass-grub larvae are soil dwelling grey/white grubs up to 15 mm long with tan coloured heads and are found lying in a C shape and feed on the roots of many pasture / lawn species and other plants.

Immediately after hatching young grass-grub start to feed on plant roots. Although larvae in the second stage can cause damage it is normally third stage grubs that the most damage.



Adult beetle are about 10 mm long and tan coloured and are present for a few weeks in spring/early summer each year when they fly after dusk and are often attracted to lights in large numbers.

The first flight of two they do is a mating flight and occurs very soon after the beetles emerge from the soil, the second consists of feeding flights and may occur for 2-3 weeks



Distribution and Damage.

Grass Grub's are found in almost all locations throughout New Zealand.

They particularly enjoy free draining loam soil types as well as sandy and peaty soils. They are found to a lesser extent on heavier clay soils. Grass-grubs cause damage that appears as brown patches within the pasture. In these patches the numbers of grass grub can be very high while outside of the patches numbers can be very low.

The normally accepted threshold for economic control of grass grub is new pasture 3 per spade square and existing pasture between 6 – 8 per spade square. For every grub discovered per spade square there is normally 25 per sq m².

Lifecycle.

The adult beetles only live for a few weeks during which they mate and the females lay their eggs (about 30) 100 to 150 mm under the soil.

Straight after hatching the 1 st stage larvae start feeding on the roots of most pastoral plants. They pass through three larval stages and from hatching unto turning into adult beetles normally take one year, however this can be extended to two years under certain circumstances i.e. soil moisture stress.

Root damage can occur from day one from hatching and reaches a peak when the grubs reach the third stage. One-year life cycle grubs reach there in the autumn and early winter, while two-year



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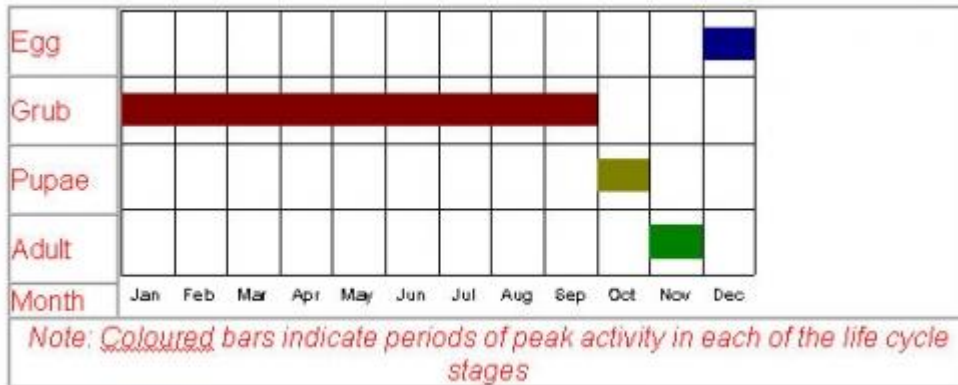
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cycle grubs reach the third stage in the spring/summer and if present with 1 year cycle grubs will cause year round damage.

Below is the normal cycle of 1 year grass grubs.



For more information or to discuss how to protect your pasture against Greasy Cut Worm please [contact Specialty Seeds](#)



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