

Cultural control of chafer grubs in maize



Chafer grubs are one of the main causes of low maize yields. Chafer grubs feed on the roots of young maize plants causing them to dry and die. Chafer grubs cause more damage in farms where cowdung which has not completely rotted and cooled is used as manure in the field.

How chafer grubs can be controlled

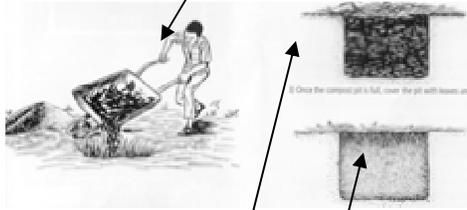
- Crop rotation - plant maize one season, the following season grow a different crop such as beans or cowpea in that field. Chafer grubs do not like eating roots of beans or cowpea, so they will not survive to attack maize the following season.
- Do not graze cows on crop left-overs in the field. The dung droppings from the cows may attract chafer grubs to lay eggs and reproduce in the field. This will destroy maize planted on that field the following season.
- Remove cowdung dropped in the field during oxen ploughing.
- Let the cowdung rot and cool before using it as manure in the field.

How to prepare good farmyard manure



1. Gathering cowdung into a heap

2. Transferring cowdung from the heap into a compost pit



3 Once the compost pit is full, cover the pit with leaves and grass

4 Cowdung after 3 months in the pit becomes fine farmyard manure



5. Put one handful of farmyard manure into each planting hole, place maize seed next to, but not on top of manure

Advantages of good farmyard manure

- Chafer grubs do not like laying eggs on cowdung that has broken down to fine manure.
- Maize plants grow stronger on soil where fine manure has been applied.
- The manure is easier to apply in the field.
- Maize yields improve.
- It does not need money.

Farmers at Machakos and Makindu confirmed that using rotted manure reduced damage by chafer grubs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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