

# Stool tipping? Yellowing? Gaps in ratoons? Maybe you've got canegrubs



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*With 19 different species, canegrubs have the highest potential of all our pests to cause economic loss.*

## Monitor now to safeguard next season's crop

Indications are that this season's beetle flights in many areas have been comparable, and in some cases, larger than in last season. Now is the time to begin sampling and monitoring for canegrubs so that you can decide whether or not to treat next season's crop.

## The critical questions to answer are:

- > Is my farm at risk from canegrubs?
- > Will I need to treat my plant cane this year?
- > Which ratoon fields should be treated after this year's harvest?

Canegrubs are almost exclusively treated with the insecticide imidacloprid. Imidacloprid is sold in a number of formulations and under numerous product names. While suSCon® *maxi* is the only controlled-release formulation, Nuprid® 700WG and Senator® 700WG are Wettable Granule formulations. Confidor® Guard and numerous generic brands are liquid formulations.

Monitoring requires the physical digging of stools to look for canegrubs under the stool. Relying on crop symptoms only may result in crop damage, especially with two-year life cycle canegrubs.

Knowing the level of canegrub activity in the current crop will give you a good indication of expected canegrub pressure in next season's crop.

## Advice for growers in the northern and central regions

Greyback canegrub is the major species present from Sarina to Mossman. It has a one-year life cycle, meaning that larvae developing from eggs laid over the past two to three months will begin to feed aggressively on cane roots from about March.

By about the end of May and into early June the larvae will be fully fed and will burrow deeper into the soil to pupate and turn into adults. These adults have the potential to infest unprotected ratoons and plant cane fields.

Because greyback canegrubs have a one-year life cycle, assessing the risk of damage to next season's crop is a prediction. This is because the eggs from which the grubs develop to infest a field have not yet been laid.

There is no direct relationship between the number of grubs present at sampling and the number that will be present next season. However, the presence of grubs this season indicates a high likelihood of grub infestation next year.

**Diagram 1** shows the timing for sampling and monitoring for greyback canegrub and crop symptoms.

Following the steps in **Diagram 2** will give you a good feel for the likely greyback canegrub pressure on blocks to be planted in the coming season and also on ratoons and whether treatment is required.

In the northern regions from Herbert to Mossman, the level of the pathogen, *Adelina*, can have a large impact on greyback numbers. Local information should be sourced, if possible, on the level of *Adelina* infections in the current greyback population.

## Advice for growers in the southern regions

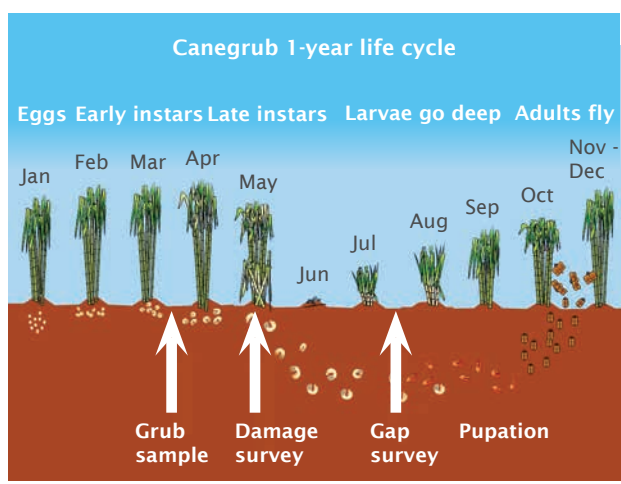
Growers in the Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough districts usually have to contend with two-year life cycle canegrubs as well as southern one-year canegrubs.

A risk assessment method based on grub sampling during March to May and checking for crop symptoms during spring and summer allows for informed treatment decisions to be made.

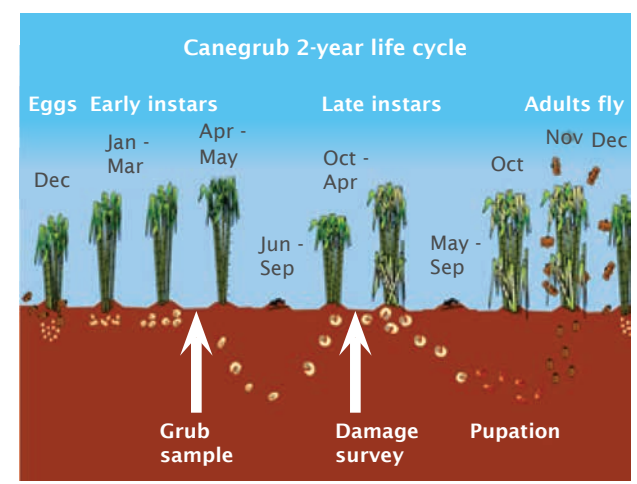
For two-year life cycle canegrubs there is a direct relationship between the number of grubs present during sampling and future damage. This is because grubs found during autumn sampling will be the same grubs that cause damage to the next crop.

**Diagram 3** shows the timing for sampling and monitoring for crop symptoms for southern districts. Sampling in autumn allows decisions to be made early so that ratoon crops at risk of two-year canegrub damage can be treated as soon as possible after harvest.

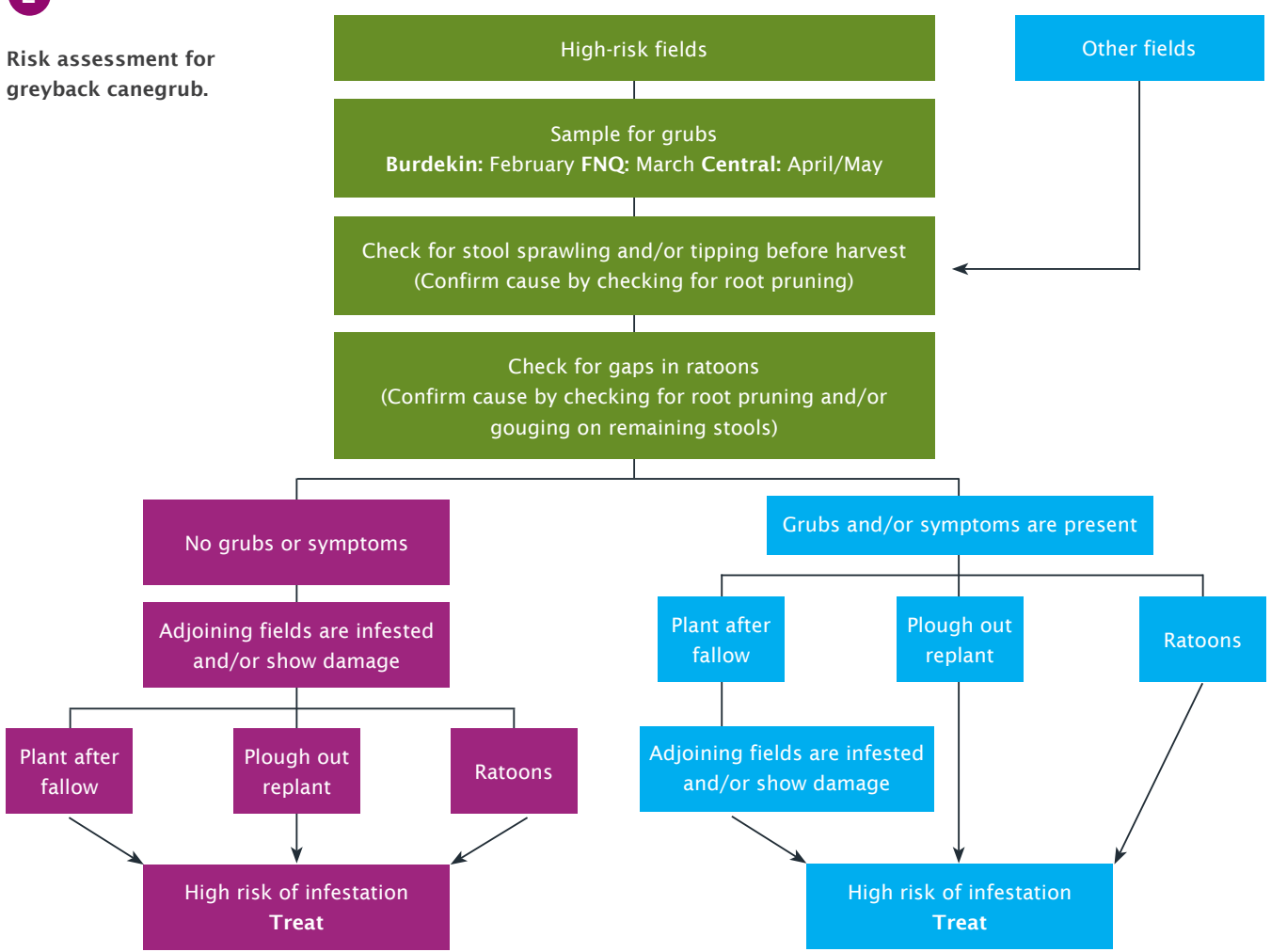
**1** Timing of sampling and monitoring for greyback canegrubs and crop symptoms.



**3** Timing of sampling and monitoring for canegrubs and crop symptoms for southern districts.

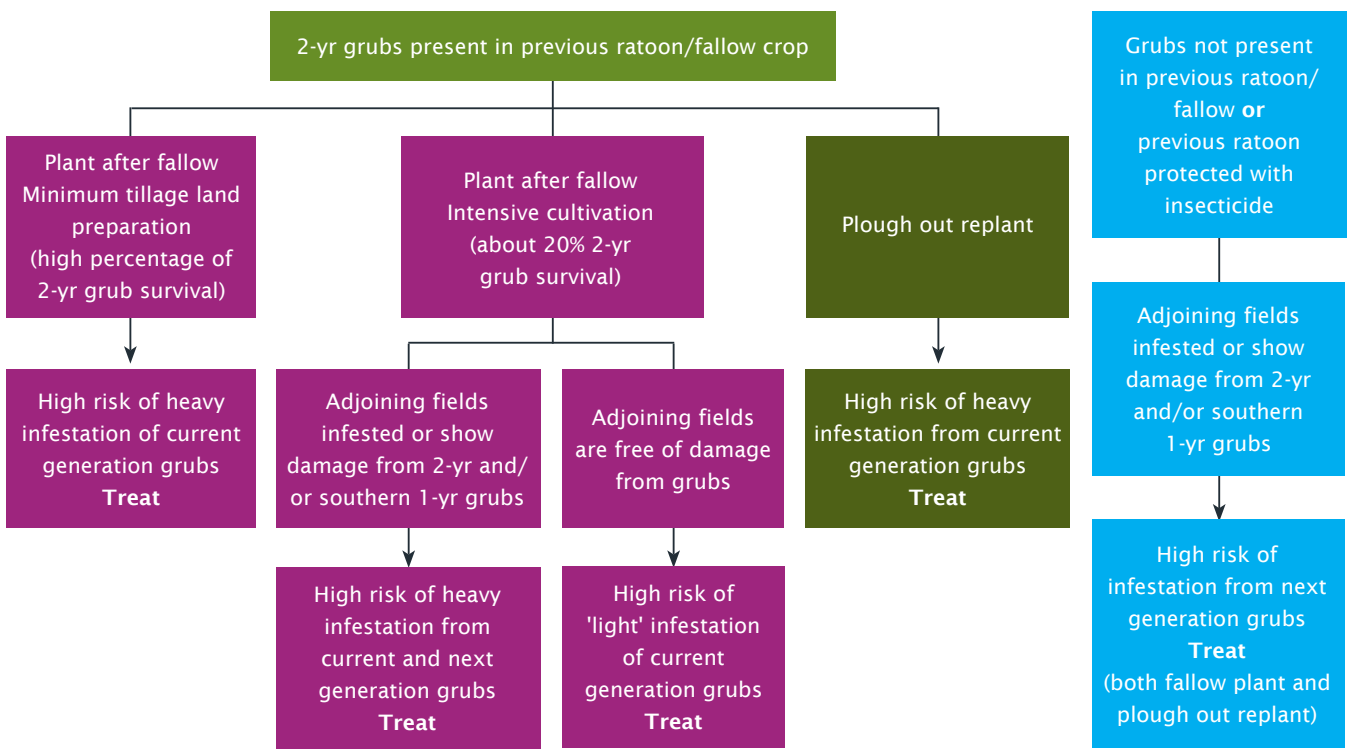


**2** Risk assessment for greyback canegrub.



Following the steps in **Diagram 4** will help southern growers decide whether a field to be planted this season will be at risk and should be treated. Follow the steps in **Diagram 5** which has been developed for ratoon crops in southern Queensland.

**4 Risk assessment for plant cane for Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough regions – based on monitoring in autumn.**



**5 Risk assessment for ratoon crops for Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough regions – based on monitoring in autumn.**

