White Grubs do Damage Wheat

As evident from the above photo, this irrigated wheat field located near the Bailey/Parmer County line is heavily infested with white grubs and causing severe feeding damage. According to Monti Vandiver, IPM Extension Agent - Bailey/Parmer Counties, the grubs killing the wheat were 80% June beetle larvae, *Phyllophaga crinita*, and 20% masked chafer beetle larvae, *Cyclocephala sp*. The c-shaped larvae are identified by comparing the pattern of stout hairs on the underside of the “tail end” (referred to as the rastral pattern). The June beetle larvae have two parallel rows of hairs (zipper) on the raster while hairs on the chafer larvae are in a more random pattern and lack the zipper pattern. The grubs feeding on the wheat now will eventually burrow deeper into the soil and overwinter as soil temperatures become colder. Until then they will continue to eat on the developing roots.

Unfortunately, there are no insecticides labeled for use against white grubs in wheat and depending on grub size seed treatments of Gaucho® or Cruiser® may or may not suppress the grub larvae. In times past, Lorsban® was once registered for grub control when chemigated, but it now only has a label for greenbug, Russian wheat aphid, army cutworms, armyworms, and a few other pests of wheat.

Photo courtesy of Monti Vandiver