

Wireworm

Wireworms, the larvae of the click beetle, are a pest of raspberry canes and strawberry plants. Although wireworms can be present in all soils, they are more likely to be found in gardens that, within the previous five years, were grass meadows before building took place.



DAMAGE:

Wireworms are up to 25mm long, orange–brown in colour with a dark head. They live at soil level and can kill newly planted strawberry crowns and raspberry shoots by eating their roots and biting in to the stems just below soil level.

CONTROL:

Many garden birds enjoy eating Wireworms therefore encourage them into your garden by putting up feeders and bird boxes and keep the ground well cultivated during spring and summer to expose the pest and help reduce numbers. This method will need to be implemented each year as the larval period of a Wire Worm can be up to four years.

This pest can be controlled biologically with natural predators using the nematode *Heterorhabditis megidis*. This nematode can be used outside between May and early September when the temperature is above 12°C (54°F). The soil or compost must be moist before and at least two weeks after application. Natural predators are available from Green Gardener (Tel: 01493 750061).

There is no recommended method of chemical control for the use on fruit stocks.