Pest Control

Pests can contaminate food and transmit severe diseases. When pests appear in a food processing plant, infestation can occur in a short period of time if they are not dealt with immediately. Implementation of a pest control program in your facility prevents pest infestation. Pest control refers to the reduction or elimination of pests including mice, rats, flies, cockroaches and other insects.

Some important considerations to prevent pests include:

Building Design and Maintenance

- The surroundings of your facility should be free of debris and stagnant water.
- Roofs and walls must be water proof.
- Exterior lights should be placed away from the building to discourage insects from swarming near the building.
- Doors and windows that can be opened should fit tightly and must have screens to keep out insects. Keep doors closed whenever possible.
- Place inside garbage containers in a suitable location and ensure they are large enough to prevent garbage overflow.
- Empty garbage containers at least once a day in a proper disposal site located outside your facility. Ensure outside containers are covered with a secure lid.
- Eliminate cracks and crevices in food storage and handling areas. Cracks and crevices are ideal areas for insects to breed and hide.
- Food containers should be stacked on pallets. Leave enough space between stacked containers and walls for cleaning and inspection.

- Maintain a routine cleaning schedule. Spills should be cleaned right away to prevent attracting pests.
- Place rodent traps against the walls, behind objects and in dark areas.
- Flying insects can be controlled with light lamps:
  - High voltage traps electrocute insects and can cause them to explode. Traps should not be placed within nine meters of exposed food or food contact surfaces.
  - Low voltage traps have an attracting light and a replaceable, sticky board. Flying insects are attracted and attached to the sticky board.

Use of Chemicals

Chemical pest control uses pesticides and baits. Never place poison bait inside the building.

Chemicals used in pest control must not contaminate the food, ingredients or packaging. A list of chemicals approved for pest control can be found at the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) public registry website https://pr-rp.hc-sc.gc.ca/ls-re/index-eng.php

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- All chemicals used for pest control should be properly labelled and stored in designated areas.
- Food processors frequently use a licensed pest management provider to apply pesticides.

Hiring a Pest Management Provider

When looking for a pest management provider, consider:

- Expertise: a pest management provider should have rigorous training in pest identification and behavior.
- License: a pest management provider must be licensed by the Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development.
- Proposal: obtain a full, detailed proposal about the scope of the pest control procedure to be performed. It should include:
  - service schedule
  - trap layout maps of your facility
  - list of pesticides to be used
  - response time for the procedure to be effective
- Report: pest management providers should supply reports with details of particular services, detailed sanitation and structural recommendations to avoid pests and corrective actions required.

Pest Management Program

An effective pest management program in a food plant should include:
- routine inspection for detection focused on areas where pests are most likely to occur: receiving docks, storage areas, employee break rooms, lockers, potential entry points, etc.
- analysis of possible factors that may attract pests, such as food residue, lack of cleaning, etc.
- pest treatments that do not pose a risk to employees, food products or the environment
- communication and co-operation between designated employees in charge of pest control and pest control providers
- recording pest control monitoring activities to measure efficiency of pest control in case of an audit and to show areas that need more attention

For more information on food safety please contact the Food Safety and Inspection Branch at foodsafety@gov.mb.ca.