

Appendix 7: Pest management

A good pest management plan will ensure that food and food contact surfaces are protected from contamination by pests. It will also help food businesses demonstrate that they are taking all practicable measures to eradicate and prevent the harbourage of pests (under Standard 3.2.2 clause 24).

A pest management plan should consider the following factors:

- What pests are to be treated: Common pests are rodents (e.g. rats, mice), insects (e.g. cockroaches, flies, ants, weevils) and birds (e.g. pigeons).
- What areas are to be inspected and treated: Pests are generally attracted to water, food and shelter in dark places. Common pest hiding places include under and behind appliances and equipment, under washing facilities, inside wall cavities and cupboards, under and inside boxes and packaging. It may be useful to have a checklist of areas to inspect.
- The types of treatment to be used (e.g. baits, sprays, traps, etc.): Include safety and shelf-life information on the chemicals used, ensuring that chemicals are suitable and approved for use in food premises.
- Locations of pest control devices (such as rat bait stations, insect attractants, zappers, spray dispensers, flyscreens) and of pesticide storage: Ensure they are placed in areas that minimise the risk of pesticides or killed pests coming in contact with food or food contact surfaces (e.g. do not place ultraviolet insect killers directly above food preparation or packaging areas). It may be useful to draw up a site map marking the locations of pest control devices and storage areas.
- The frequency of inspections and pest treatment: The frequency and timing will depend on individual circumstances, such as the premises' location, climate, type of food, type of pest, season and signs of pest activity (droppings, fur, etc.). Inspections and treatments should occur regularly and often enough to ensure chemicals are not used beyond expiration dates, used baits and traps are replaced or reset, and killed pests are removed, so that the premises and vehicles remain free from pests.
- Hiring a professional pest controller is not a requirement under these standards, but it can be useful to have a professional visit the premises regularly as they must meet relevant legislative requirements.

Ensuring the food premises and food transport vehicles are kept clean, tidy and well maintained will also help prevent problems with pests. Measures to prevent the entry and nesting/breeding of pests include keeping food and equipment off the floor, storing food and waste in sealed containers, promptly disposing of rubbish and regularly checking pest-prone hiding areas such as behind equipment, under sinks and so on.

See also Standard 3.2.2 clause 24 and regulatory agency websites in Resources and References.

Written reports of any pest inspections and eradication treatments (conducted by the business or a professional pest controller) are useful documents to keep, including details on dates of inspections and treatments, any pest activity observed, chemicals/controls used and recommended remedial actions. Ensure that any recommended actions are seen to as soon as practicable.