

Food Safety Information

Storage Product Pests

Stored-product pests are usually brought into the premises in an infested package of food. Initially, infestations are easy to overlook because the insects involved are quite small, especially in the egg and larval stages. Often the first indication of the infestation is the appearance of small moths flying about or the presence of beetles in or near the food package.

DAMAGE

Product pests damage food by contaminating it with their bodies and their by-products. The larval stage of the Indian meal moth produces frass (excrement) and webbing, and some beetle larvae produce secretions that give food a disagreeable odour and taste. Setae (hairs) from the warehouse beetle can irritate the mouth, throat, and stomach of people who eat infested products. In addition, stored product pests might introduce microbes into the food that could produce mycotoxins (which can be carcinogenic or may target the kidney, liver or immune system.), especially if the food is stored in warm, humid conditions.

MANAGEMENT

Getting rid of food-infesting moths or beetles takes continuous, persistent effort if the infestation has been present for a while. Some pests are capable of living for many weeks without food, thus the threat of re-infestation exists until they die off or are killed. You are therefore strongly advised to call a professional Pest Control Company to assist with identifying the extent of the infestation and how best to treat for it.

DETECTION

It is important to include inspection for pests during times of cleaning and stock rotation. If you find small moths or beetles crawling or flying around your premises, look for the food source of these pests and remove it immediately. If you locate the infestation before it spreads to other packages, control may be relatively easy. The source is commonly a package that has become damaged. The best thing to do with these packages is seal them up and dispose of them, removing them from the premises immediately.



A Sawtoothed
Grain Beetle



The Indian Meal Moth



An Indian Meal Moth Larvae



A Grain Weevil

The Warehouse Beetle & Larvae

