

Pest Tip of the Month



Stored Product Mites



Mites are tiny arachnids that have been known to infest dry pet food, baking mixes, grain products, dried vegetable materials, cheese, corn and dried fruits. They are difficult to see and often go undetected until their numbers are significant.

We have recently seen an increase in mite problems at grocery/retail stores, particularly in pet food aisles.



Risk

Mites can damage or contaminate food products. They can cause “grocer’s itch”, a contact skin irritation, in humans exposed to the mites. Mites may also trigger allergic reactions in people and pets.

Interesting Facts

- Mites like warm temperatures (80-90 degrees F) and high humidity. Under these conditions, they can multiply rapidly.
- Mites look like spongy brown dust. They can be found in pegboards, on the shelves, between bags or boxes of product and underneath storage racks.
- Many infestations start on the floor where dust and spillage often accumulates.



Cleaning the entire floor under an aisle will help to prevent most mite, moth and beetle infestations.

Prevention

- Sanitation and rotation are the keys to mite prevention. Rotate stock and remove all out-of-code product.
- Clean the floor below pet food, bird food and grain product shelves with a vacuum at least every six months.
- Keep the storage area dry and cool to reduce the risk of a stored product mite infestation.

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