



Technical Bulletin

Setting the Standard for Food Safety and Pest Management Solutions

February 2019

Volume 9, Issue 2

We'll Fix it for the Audit



"We'll fix it for the audit", a phrase most food manufacturing professionals have heard at least once in their career. Sadly, it has become a common phrase muttered by Sr. Management a lot lately. When an organization decides to attain GFSI level certification it is often because "they have to" to keep their customers. When a company is "forced" to comply with a

globally recognized food safety standard they just go through the motions to get the certificate and don't live food safety. If an organization is scared of unannounced audits their food safety culture is not where it needs to be. This attitude from Sr. Management can be toxic and, of course, doesn't promote proper behavior within the organization. Culture starts at the top and trickles down. Management needs to lead by example, lead from the front and not lead from fear. Doing the right thing when no one is looking while remaining audit ready all the time need to be ingrained in the people who are entrusted to make or distribute our foods. Ensuring the beliefs of the organization promote safety, and quality, makes all the difference on the outcome. Talk the talk and walk the walk, Sr. Management needs to be highly visible to show support and their presence carries a lot of weight. It allows them to experience the culture and instill values. Little things like washing their hands in the presence of hourly employees goes a long way.

Communication needs to be two-way at all times. Allowing management to dictate all aspects of the food safety management system does not support a solid food safety culture. All employees of the organization need to provide feedback and act as change agents to ensure practice meets procedure in a manageable way. If something is not realistic it either will not be done at all, falsified, or done improperly. A team based approach is the only way to succeed.

Submitted by: Rich Gibson, ACE, CHA

The Hairy Fungus Beetle



Order: Coleoptera **Family:** Mycetophagidae **Genus:** Mycetophagus **Species:** M. punctatus

Several insects that feed on fungi are commonly found in grains; one of the more common species is the hairy fungus beetle, *Typhaea stercorea* (L.). This insect does not feed on the grain itself, but on fungi which grow on high moisture grain. Its presence is an indication of moldy grain. It is seldom the primary insect species in an infested grain bin.

The adult is a small, brownish beetle about 1/10 of an inch long and covered with hairs. It resembles the drugstore beetle, but is smaller and has club-like antennae instead of saw-like, antennae. Other stages of the insect are seldom seen in grain bins. Adults may also be introduced into grain bins on newly harvested grain. Very little information is available on the life cycle of this pest. The adult hairy fungus beetles feed on molds growing on stored grains, where females deposit their eggs.

Control of this insect begins with good management. Before new grain is placed in a bin, the old grain should be thoroughly removed from the walls, floors, and augers inside the bin. Harvest equipment should also be cleaned before reuse. If possible, the grain should be screened to remove broken kernels and other contaminants.

Some content sourced from: <https://ento.psu.edu/>

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It's in the Breakroom



A small confectionary manufacturer had several employees report “roach” sightings using the RK Environmental Services (RKE) Pest Sighting Log the client keeps posted in the breakroom at their facility. The dedicated RKE Service Specialist reviews this sighting log at the start of every service to ensure proper corrective actions are taken when pests are reported. It didn't take long to find and identify the culprit, the [German Cockroach](#). The roaches were initially located under and behind the breakroom refrigerator. Further inspection of the approximately 20' X 20' break area identified more ‘pockets’ of activity under the sink, in several wall mounted cabinets and on the shelves used to hold employee belongings and lunches. To ensure the cockroaches were confined to the break room, the Service Specialist inspected the adjoining and adjacent rooms and areas. No additional activity was identified so the focus was placed on the breakroom. The client's Production Supervisor provided assistance in moving the refrigerator away from the wall and had an employee begin removing live roaches using a Shop-Vac. While the Service Specialist conducted the scheduled IPM service, another employee began mopping the floors and wiping down the walls using a chlorinated cleaner to remove attractants and pheromones left behind by the pest. The Production Supervisor then had all items removed from the cabinets and shelves. Those items not claimed by employees were discarded and the personal items inspected for any roaches before leaving the building. Employees placed their items in their vehicles or they were placed in trash bags and tied close to isolate and protect the items.

Once the room was cleaned from top to bottom, the Service Specialist began to apply insecticidal gel baits labeled for roaches higher on the walls and joints around the wall mounted cabinets and shelves. A mixture of a residual insecticide and an insect growth regulator (IGR) was applied under the refrigerator and along baseboards and cracks and crevices found. To ensure proper control, all cracks, crevices, holes in the drywall, etc. were patched or otherwise sealed to remove potential harborage points.

After discussing some details with the management team, it was discovered that there is no formal cleaning program for the breakroom and no one really knew who was responsible for it. Itemized schedules were created to ensure that the refrigerator is emptied at shutdown every Friday, the shelves are emptied and cleaned weekly and the floors and walls around the refrigerator are deep cleaned at least monthly. Daily sweeping and emptying of trash were added to the daily preoperational checklist for supervisors and employees educated on pests in their workplace and the risks of bringing them in.

Take Away Tips:

- Provide a method to report pest sightings
- Have a documented procedure and schedule for breakroom cleaning
- Educate employees on how to identify common pests and their evidence
- No one single action can resolve a problem
- One cockroach is too many
- Employees can be the source of infestation

Submitted by: Rich Gibson, ACE, CHA