

PEST MANAGEMENT ON FOOD PREMISES

Food Act 2006
Food Safety Standards



The presence of vermin and insects in or near your food premises is bad for business. Insects and vermin carry diseases. They can contaminate your food, make your customers sick, and will drive away customers.

CHECK FOR PESTS

Regularly check your premises for pests by looking for signs such as droppings, nibbled holes in food packets, ant trails and cockroaches. Check at the back of cupboards, on the floor under shelving, behind refrigerators and equipment, etc.

Engage your licensed pest control technician if there is evidence of pests.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PESTS?

Cockroaches

Cockroaches live and hide in sewers and drains. They like dark and moist areas – especially kitchens. Bacteria are carried on their legs, body and in their saliva and faeces. Bacteria are then transferred to equipment, utensils and eventually food, causing foodborne illness.

Flies

Flies lay their eggs in warm, moist places such as food and refuse. In summer temperatures, the egg can develop into a maggot, and then an adult fly, in as little as ten days. A fly eats by regurgitating liquid from its stomach onto the food. The liquid dissolves the solid food and the fly then mops up the liquid with its mouth. This liquid contains bacteria, which are transferred onto food and equipment. The fly also carries bacteria on its feet, hair and faeces.

Rats and mice

Rats and mice transmit disease and can cause destruction of food crops, buildings and electrical cables. Most of the damage they do is physical, such as gnawing. Food can become contaminated by their droppings, urine and hairs. They carry bacteria from soil, waste food and refuse, on their fur and feet, transferring them to uncovered food and surfaces.

Ants

Ants can contaminate, damage and spoil food products. They live in soil, under pavers, in wall cavities or roof voids, so you won't want them marching through your food cupboards.

PEST CONTROL

Engage a licensed pest control contractor to inspect and treat the food premises. Arrange pest control on a frequency recommended by the pest control technician. This may vary depending on the level of pest activity at your food premise.

Pest control will only work if you have actively prevented pest entry, attraction and harbourage.

Discuss with the pest control technician how to improve pest control at your food premises and follow their recommendations.

PREVENTING PEST ENTRY INTO A FOOD PREMISES

To prevent pests from entering your food premises, consider:

- » installing fly screens and maintaining them in good condition
- » sealing all gaps underneath and around doors that lead outside - a weather strip can be installed to seal gaps under doors
- » ensuring external doors are closed
- » checking deliveries to ensure that pests are not brought in with stock.

PREVENTING PEST ATTRACTION AND HARBOURAGE

Pests can be attracted to an area by the presence of food, dirt, grease or waste generally resulting from a lack of cleaning. Many areas within a food premises can also provide a place for these pests to live, otherwise known as harbourage.

The following are ways to minimise attraction and harbourage:

- » Seal any gaps throughout the kitchen including:
 - junctions between ceilings and walls
 - junctions between splashbacks and walls
 - junctions between benchtops and splashbacks or walls
 - around exhaust canopies
 - holes in walls or ceilings
 - placing grates over open drains.
- » Remove cardboard boxes and other unnecessary items to reduce clutter.
- » Store food in sealed food grade containers off the ground.
- » Seal around any manholes in the ceiling.

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- » Seal around cables, conduits and pipes that extrude out of the floor, ceiling and walls. Remove food waste regularly. Keep surfaces clean.
- » Remove rubbish regularly and keep waste storage areas clean.
- » Regularly service grease traps.

Food businesses must take all reasonable measures to prevent the harbourage and entry of pests into their food premises or food vehicles.

MORE INFORMATION

If you require any further information, please visit the Townsville City Council website townsville.qld.gov.au or call Council's Customer Service Centre on 13 48 10.