

# Pests vs the meat processing plant

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Every owner or person responsible for hygiene and safety in a Meat processing plant should implement a pest control policy which contributes to maximizing of food safety. The policy must ensure that a fair, consistent and timely approach will be taken by staff in response to the presence or activity of pests, more particularly rodents within meat plants. Pest presence or activity inside a meat processing plant poses a significant risk to food safety as they may lead to contamination of ingredients, packaging, food contact surfaces and food. Evidence of rodent presence or their activity includes droppings, sightings, gnawing, grease marks and nesting.

Rodent presence or activity is problematic and requires immediate response.

All Pests should be controlled to prevent their access to slaughterhouses and Meat processing plants. This is best achieved by the construction of buildings and working places where access of pests is hindered, unfortunately most Meat Processing plants are existing old buildings which make closing of all

entry points almost impossible. In all circumstances good Pest control measures are of utmost importance. Keeping a Meat processing plant cool is crucial not only for bacteria but also for keeping pests like cockroaches and flies away. The cold is a good starting point but will not be the only determining factor as pests will still forage for food even if they have to tolerate the cold.

The most effective way to control rodents in a Meat processing plant is to separate them from food supplies forcing them to migrate in search of food elsewhere. All water sources should be eliminated especially display fridges which normally leak water after sometime. This can only be done through careful management of hygiene standards in food production.

The best known method of control is using of traps. Trapping is of special importance in an environment where food is produced, handled or stored because poisonous baits cannot be used for safety reasons. If Chemical products are used they will be accompanied by supporting documents to show that they are suitable for use in food processing

areas. Chemicals must be stored separately from meat products to prevent contamination and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

If it is deemed necessary to use bait stations, it is important to prevent spread of rodenticides in the production areas and the bait stations should be inspected regularly.

Sanitation methods along with screens to keep flies out of the Meat processing plant should be sufficient. All the residues from meat products should be sealed in bags and not left in garbage bins as this is an excellent breeding place for flies.

On the outside of the Meat processing plant, residual insecticides can be applied to surfaces such as walls and overhangs that are being used by the flies as resting areas.

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Baits can be used in refuse areas and may be effective in reducing the number of adult flies if proper sanitation practices are followed. Meat is very sensitive to bacteria and most insects carry bacteria from one area to another. Good sanitation and frequent inspections will ensure that the Meat processing plant is safe from pests and that clients will remain happy with the quality of products that are sold.