Stored Product Pests

Nebraska Extension
Stored Product Pests

- Common pests include
  - Indian Meal Moth
  - Carpet / Dermestid Beetles
  - Sawtoothed Grain Beetles
  - Flour Beetles
  - Others are described in, *Integrated Pest Management In Sensitive Environments: A How-to Guidebook*

- Control of these pests - find the infestation and throw away product
- Insecticides are not recommended
Indian meal moth

- Appears silver-colored, but has two-toned wings
- Feed on many stored foods
- Pheromone traps will catch adult moths
  - Pheromones fool males into thinking a mate is nearby
  - Captured adults indicate an infestation in the area

IMM adults are about $\frac{1}{2}$"
Larvae foul foodstuffs

- Grain and grain products
- Nuts, dried fruits, powdered milk, spices, graham crackers, etc.
- After feeding, larvae crawl away from food and pupate
- Sometimes found in odd places, “wandering”

IMM larvae grow to about ½” just before pupation
Look for webbing/frass on surface of food

- Look for adults, larvae and pupae:
  - Inside food packages
  - Along package seals
  - Along wall/ceiling junctions
  - In cracks and crevices
Carpet beetles: common, small, oval-shaped beetle

Some people call them weevils... but they’re not...

- Processed and unprocessed foods
- Flour, cereals, meal, candy, cocoa, cookies, and spices
- Wool in carpets and rugs, hair, feathers, fur

Most species of Carpet beetle adults are about $\frac{1}{4}$"
Sawtoothed Grain Beetle

- Processed foods, no whole grains
- Cereals, bran, dried fruits, nuts, sugar, and macaroni

Saw-toothed grain beetle adults are less than $\frac{1}{4}$"
Flour Beetles

- Processed foods, no whole grains
- Flour, cracked grains, cake mixes, dried fruits, nuts, chocolate, and spices

Confused flour beetle adults are about 3/16”
Prevent stored product pests

- Vacuum rugs and carpets regularly
- Store susceptible items, in sealed, airtight containers
- Eliminate taxidermy mounts (birds, deer, etc.)
Prevent stored product pests

Don’t store products for a long time

- Check at dock for damage
- Date incoming supplies, use oldest first
- Purchase in sizes that can be used in a short time

Photo: Iowa State University
Prevent stored product pests

- Remove items from cardboard boxes before shelving to eliminate hiding places
- Freeze dry products for 3 to 4 days to kill eggs that may otherwise hatch
- Keep food storage areas clean!
Prevent stored product pests

- Store dried foods in insect-proof containers
  - screw-top glass, plastic jars, or metal cans
  - Prevents escape and entry of pests from the outside
Clean, don’t Spray

- Do not use insecticide sprays to control fabric or pantry insect pests
- Pheromone traps can be useful to monitor how your control tactics are working

Photo: Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County
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