

Need to Know

- Straight talk for professionals about pests and pest control products

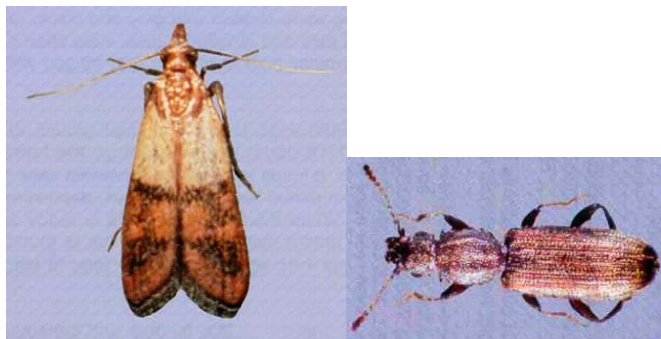
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Residential Stored Product Pest Management

Everyone likes a free prize in their box of breakfast cereal. However, Pest Management Professionals don't want their residential customers to bring home Stored Product Pests (SPP's) in their corn flakes.

The term Stored Product Pest refers to over 20 species of moths and/or beetles that infest food commodities from the point of harvest through the processing and manufacturing chain, along the product distribution, transport and retailing sites and into the home.

The most common SPP specie found in North America is the Indian Meal Moth (IMM). This small moth is a scavenger that feeds on a variety of foods including; flours, nuts, spices, cereals, dry pet foods, candy, and finished baked goods. The most common SPP beetle species is the Saw-toothed Grain Beetle (SGB). This very small, elongated beetle will infest the same types of foods as the IMM but is most commonly found on dry pet foods, candy (especially chocolate) and nuts. Positive identification is important to help determine the most probable type of foods that might be infested.



Indian meal moth

Saw-toothed grain beetle

PMP's must educate and have their customers committed to an extensive inspection of all potential infestation sources: spices; pet foods (include exotic pet foods such as bird seed, fish food, etc.); hobby materials (seeds, grain shells, shadow boxes); and dried flower arrangements and wreaths. Unopened packages are not necessarily insect-free. PMP's should also investigate the presence of rodenticides. Neglected rodent baits can support SPP's in attics, basements, garages and wall voids.

Infested goods must be discarded. Valuable items can be fumigated or heat treated by an experienced professional. Cold treatment is not practical for the average PMP. Placing items in household freezers usually does not drop the ambient temperature of the insects fast enough for mortality.

Thoroughly vacuum and clean food storage sites (soap and water) to remove insects, eggs, pupae, frass and potentially attractive food debris. Sanitation must occur everywhere SPP activity is present.

Once cleaning is completed the PMP can treat food storage sites and areas of activity to kill SPP's that may be hiding in voids, cracks and crevices. Always read and follow all pesticide label directions. Apply **Suspend® SC** or **Tempo® SC Ultra** as a crack and crevice treatment around areas of food storage and previous activity. Remember to treat 'high' and 'low'; many SPP's will leave the infested food to pupate and will crawl to hide behind wall and ceiling moldings. Potentially infested wall and cabinet voids can be treated with **Tempo® dust** or **DeltaDust®**. Remember that no visible dust should be left on food storage surfaces after treatment.

After treatment, homeowners should store susceptible new products in insect-proof containers wherever possible, such as Tupperware. Plastic bags, foil bags and even metal containers are not acceptable. Insects may be able to penetrate plastic and foils, metal canisters usually do not provide the lid seal that will exclude the immature stages of these insects.

Highly suspect commodities (pet foods, bird seed) should be stored in insect proof containers away from the human food storage areas. Garages are the best.

PMP's may consider using pheromone traps to monitor the conditions of infestation after treatment. These traps will lure adult insects and help monitor their presence and when used in quantity, the locations of infestation. Pheromone traps are effective only for monitoring activity. They provide no significant control contribution in residential environments.

Remember to instruct the customer that complete eradication of the infestation may take as long as six months. SPP pupae may lay dormant for that long after your treatment.

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