

Chapter 6 Pest Control

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6. Introduction

Pests (insects, rodents, birds, as well as domestic animals) entering or infesting food establishments are a potential source of microbiological and physical hazards. Poorly executed pest control programmes and careless storage and use of pesticides may also result in chemical hazards. Procedures are needed to prevent or minimise the risk of such hazards causing illness or injury to consumers.

Examples demonstrating the importance of pest control:

Problem	Effect	Possible outcome
Pest species carrying harmful micro-organisms	Birds, rodents and insects are carriers of food poisoning bacteria (Campylobacter and Salmonella)	Increase chance of microbiological cross contamination of food products by food poisoning bacteria (such as Campylobacter and Salmonella)
Pest may carry germs around a food establishment	Flies can transfer contamination from dirty to clean areas	Increase chance of microbiological cross contamination of food products by food poisoning bacteria (such as Campylobacter and Salmonella)
Pests entry into food establishments	Pest are a source of physical contamination such as animal hair, feathers, droppings, urine, nesting materials, insect eggs and larvae, and the bodies of the pest species themselves	Physical contamination of food
Pests can cause physical damage	Damage to food products and packaging, fixtures and equipment (for example, gnawing electrical cables), and the fabric of the building	Physical contamination of food, and health and safety hazards
Carelessness with regard to insecticides and rodenticides	Careless storage and use of insecticides and rodenticides	Accidents, and chemical contamination of food products
Serious underlying hygiene failures	Inadequate cleaning and maintenance	Persistent pest infestations

6.1. Pest control checklist

Food business operators have the responsibility to control pests. This may be carried out by company staff or by contractors. If carried out by staff, a pest control checklist will help to make sure that areas are not missed out from inspection, and provides a place to record whether infestations have been found and the action that is then taken.

A pest control checklist is available in 'Annex 1.' at the end of this chapter.

6.2. Legal requirements for pest control

The following section sets out the pest control requirements of the regulations that apply to slaughter, dressing and further processing of meat.

A. Pest control

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Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Food premises: Chapter I points 1 and 2 (c)

A1. The layout, design, construction, siting and size of food premises are to permit good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination and, in particular, pest control.

852/2004 Annex II Food Waste: Chapter VI point 3

A2. Adequate provision is to be made for the storage and disposal of food waste, non-edible by-products and other refuse. Refuse stores are to be designed and managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and where necessary, free of animals and pests.

A1. and A2. Compliance regarding design and layout for pest control

- Take pest control into account in the layout, design and construction of premises.
- Design refuse stores in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean and free of animals and pests.

A1. and A2. Good practice

Take account of the need to prevent the entry of pest, domestic and feral animals onto the premises in the design, layout and construction of new or altered premises, including refuse stores.

See 'A6.'

Take account of all potential entry points; for example doors, windows, ventilation inlets / outlets, drains, by-product chutes, lairage / slaughter hall interface and consider ways of minimising the risks such as self-closing door mechanisms, fly screens, drain traps, chute end flaps, air curtains etc.

See 'A4.' and 'A7.' and chapter 2 on 'Design and facilities'.



Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Food Waste: Chapter VI point 3

A2. Adequate provision is to be made for the storage and disposal of food waste, non-edible by-products and other refuse. Refuse stores are to be designed and managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and where necessary, free of animals and pests.

852/2004 Annex II Foodstuffs: Chapter IX point 2

A3. Raw materials and all ingredients stored in a food business are to be kept in appropriate conditions designed to prevent harmful deterioration and protect them from contamination.

A2. and A3. Compliance regarding storage

- Make adequate provision for the storage and disposal of food waste inedible by-products and other refuse. Manage refuse stores in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and free of animals and pests.
- Keep raw materials and all ingredients stored in appropriate conditions designed to prevent harmful deterioration and protect them from contamination.

A2. and A3. Good practice

Incoming goods - check incoming raw materials and packaging for signs of infestation by insects and small rodents before storing.

Storage of edible materials - store raw ingredients, spices etc. in rodent-proof containers. Stack stored materials in a way that avoids creating hiding places where pests may escape detection, for example, clear of walls, corners, windows and ventilators. Store materials above floor level to allow access for cleaning.

Stock rotation - rotate stocks of materials, for example, packaging, in store to minimise the opportunities for pest infestations to become established in them.

Storage of inedible materials - store waste materials, inedible by-products and other refuse in covered, marked containers. Dispose of animal by-products in accordance with the Regulation. See Animal By-Products – with Edible Co-Products guidance:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/quidancenotes/meatregsguid/coproductbyproductguide>

When not in use storage bins / facilities must be proofed against insects, birds, vermin and other pests.



Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Food premises: Chapter I points 1 and 2 (c)

A4. Food premises are to be kept clean and maintained in good repair and condition.

A4. Compliance regarding maintenance and cleaning

- Keep premises clean and maintained in good repair and condition.

A4. Good practice

Maintenance - keep buildings in a good state of repair to minimise the opportunity for pest infestation. Take steps to seal or proof holes, cracks and other likely points of pest entry (for example, air bricks and ventilation panels; open ends of drains to the outside of the premises; gaps around drains, pipes and girders where these pass through walls; openings in the apex or eaves of roofs). Rats in particular require drinking water to survive so eliminate permanent pools of water, and repair dripping taps and leaks.

Cleaning - build-up of food and waste can attract pests. Keep all food production and storage areas as well as outside areas clean and tidy (for example, remove vegetation, pallet stacks and disused equipment) to minimise the possibility of providing food and refuge to pests.



Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Training: Chapter XII point 1

A5. Food business operators are to ensure that food handlers are supervised and instructed and / or trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activity

A5. Compliance regarding training, instruction and supervision

- Make sure that food handlers are supervised and appropriately instructed and / or trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activity.

A5. Good practice

Instruct staff about the food safety hazards associated with pest infestation, the need to follow instructions and to report pest sightings and failing control measures promptly to a manager. Supervise as appropriate and issue reminders to staff if lapses occur.

Keep accurate individual training records to show what instruction / training has been given. See chapter 7 on 'Training'.

Pest control contractor – if using contractors, choose carefully. Ask for evidence of competence, for example, training certificates or references. Agree the service that will be provided, reporting procedures and record keeping. A specialist contractor can advise on good housekeeping measures to prevent pest infestation.

Advice may be obtained from the British Pest Control Association at: www.bpca.org.uk.

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Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Rooms: Chapter II point 1 (d)

A6. Windows and other openings ... which can be opened to the outside environment are, where necessary, to be fitted with insect-proof screens which can be easily removed for cleaning.

A6. Compliance regarding pest proofing windows and doors

- Make sure that windows and other openings that can be opened to the outside environment are, where necessary, fitted with insect-proof screens that can be easily removed for cleaning.

A6. Good practice

Windows - make sure that external windows are tight fitting and are only left open if fitted with separate cleanable fly screens. Fly screens should have a maximum mesh size of 2mm.

Doors - make sure that external doors are tight fitting (i.e. light is not visible around the frame when closed). Operate a 'closed door policy' whereby doors are shut when not in use. Where external doors are in frequent use (for example, loading bays) additional measures (for example, overlapping plastic strips) will help to exclude pests but must not be allowed to compromise hygiene through lack of cleaning and maintenance or contact with exposed meat. Self-closing door mechanisms can also be effective, particularly for personnel doors.

Other measures that may deter rodents include metal kick plates and rubber or bristle strips under doors and drain traps, chute end flaps, for drains and vents etc. Use a mesh size of less than 6mm to exclude small rodents.

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Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Foodstuffs: Chapter IX point 4

A7. Adequate procedures are to be in place to prevent domestic animals from having access to places where food is prepared, handled, or stored (or, where the competent authority so permits in special cases, to prevent such access from resulting in contamination).

A7. Compliance regarding access by domestic animals

- Put adequate procedures in place to prevent domestic animals from having access to places

where food is prepared, handled, or stored (or, where the competent authority so permits in special cases, to prevent such access from resulting in contamination).

A7. Good practice

Take steps to prevent cats, dogs and other domestic animals accessing the premises. Guard dogs or sheep dogs may be permitted in the lairage and surrounds as long as their presence does not contaminate food.

Denying access to sources of food, water and shelter for pests, particularly to stores of refuse, food (or feed) will remove such attractions for other animals too.



Legal requirement

852/2004 Annex II Foodstuffs: Chapter IX point 4

A8. Adequate procedures are to be in place to control pests.

A8. Compliance regarding the use of pesticides

- Put adequate procedures in place to control pests.
- Use pesticides that are specifically approved for the intended situation and use them safely. Follow manufacturer instructions:
 - The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 2002 as amended (for GB): www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2002/2677/contents/made
 - COSHH 2003 as amended (for NI): www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2003/34/contents/made

A8. Good practice

Company's procedures need to cover action to be taken to destroy and eradicate pests if found.

Pesticides - ensure insecticides, rodenticides etc. are specifically approved for the intended use and situation, and that manufacturer's instructions are followed, including requirements for food to be removed or equipment to be covered before the treatment is applied. Store chemicals safely and securely so that there is no risk of food contamination. Each chemical should be supplied with health and safety data sheets.

'Professional use' pesticides - only appropriately trained persons may apply such chemical products. Where in-house expertise is not available, use a suitably trained pest control contractor.

For further information about the safe use of pesticides or general information, including information on the COSHH Regulations, contact the Health and Safety Executive at: www.hse.gov.uk

In NI contact the Health and Safety Executive NI at: www.hseni.gov.uk

A8. Compliance regarding the eradication of insects, rodents, and birds

- Put adequate procedures in place to control pests.

A8. Good practice

Insects - install suitable devices for the destruction of flying insects in low light areas, close to entrances, but not above food, equipment or packaging. Clean and service units regularly (for example, clean out catch trays, replace bulbs) to ensure their efficacy. High numbers of insects found when catch trays are cleaned out will indicate a pest control failure, and identification of the species may help to trace the source of the problem.

If an insect infestation is indicated, take immediate action to eradicate it, if it is serious, it may be necessary to use insecticides, but unless there is sufficient expertise in-house, this is best left to an approved pest control contractor.

Rodents - these are a common problem in or around food premises. Live capture traps may be used to deal with very small infestations, or where there is a high risk of food becoming contaminated by rodenticides. Otherwise, a programme of rodenticidal bait laying may be necessary.

Rodent bait laying - unless there is sufficient in-house expertise, bait laying should be carried out by an approved pest control contractor. Establish baiting points at intervals around the perimeter of the premises and at strategic points in the buildings, with regular inspection of baiting points for signs of bait uptake. Mark all baiting points on a site plan. Prevent contamination by placing bait in secure bait boxes and do not place them in areas where food is exposed. Remove bodies promptly and dispose of them safely.

Birds - using anti-perching wires, repellent gels, and acoustic or visual scarers if needed to deter birds. Wild birds are protected and poisoning birds is illegal in all circumstances. Where serious bird problems are present that cannot be prevented by proofing and removal of food sources and nesting and roosting sites, it may be necessary to introduce culling as a last resort. Only authorised persons may carry out culling of certain pest species.

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Pest control - in-house pest control may be set up as long as staff are appropriately trained and the procedures are clearly documented.

A8. Compliance regarding pest inspections

- Put adequate procedures in place to control pests.

A8. Good practice

Establish an inspection routine. A checklist will help to make sure that no area is missed, and can be used to record whether infestations have been found and the action taken.

Check periodically for:

- likely routes of pest entry, including unscreened external doors and windows
- possible sources of food and water and places of shelter for pests
- signs of pest infestation, including rodent or bird droppings, dead insects, or nest holes, and uptake of bait at baiting points and efficacy of insect killing devices

6.3. Official control requirements

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Legal requirement

854/2004 Article 4 point 4 (f)

Audits by officials of good hygiene practices shall verify that meat plant operators apply pest control procedures continuously and properly.

854/2004 Article 4 point 5

Audits by officials of HACCP - based procedures shall verify that meat plant operators apply such procedures continuously and properly...

