



“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” goes some sage advice from Benjamin Franklin. This is just as relevant to pest management as to other aspects of life. Whether you call them preventative or pro-active, tactics to make the food plant environment unsuitable for pest development will be cheaper and more sustainable in the long run.

The “Pest Management Pyramid” graphic is a great tool for visualizing the integration of many tactics toward the goal of preventative and sustainable pest management.



THE PEST MANAGEMENT PYRAMID

- The pyramid is built on a solid foundation of **IDENTIFICATION** and biological information about pest threats. Biological information provides insight to the vulnerabilities of pests to the full range of management tools and techniques that are available for management. Often, a very specific environmental requirement or aspect of behavior is the chink in the armor we can exploit. For example, pheromone mating disruption technology works so well against Indian Meal Moths only because the adults have such short life spans and adults need to mate successfully within 3 days.
- **SANITATION** to deprive pests of the food and harborage they need, or timed to break life cycles, prevents infestations from developing. The preferred method for controlling small flies, for example is not pesticide use, but cleaning of drains and other developmental sites on at least a seven day schedule.
- **INSPECTION** to catch problems early, prevent importation of pests with supplies, or better yet – to locate and correct conducive conditions, keeps infestations small or prevents them from ever developing. Certain stored product beetles are indicators of excess moisture and mold. The insects may be objectionable, but thank them for alerting you to a moisture issue where it should not be.
- **MONITORING** and especially analyzing pest activity data elucidates developing trends and hotspots for early intervention. It may point to a batch of product that is aging in storage and needs to be moved out, or something like a door that is not closing properly allowing pest invasions.
- **MAINTENANCE** activities that improve exclusion or eliminate structural harborages are enormously helpful for correcting the source of pest problems once and for all.
- And, even **PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS** can be selected and timed with prevention in mind rather than reacting to infestations.

There have been dramatic success stories associated with proactive integrated pest management programs. Facilities have gained ten days or more production time annually and eliminated fumigations thanks to well-integrated sanitation adjustments, harborage reduction, better monitoring analysis and smarter pesticide use. Educational efforts in the grain industry are reaffirming good management techniques for grain quality management including pest management. Preventative use of grain protectants has been gaining acceptance in the grain and milling industries as an alternative to fumigations after insects have already become established. Imagine the number of times some crack or crevice harborage might be sprayed over time, when it could be sealed once and for all.

Jerry Heath, Board Certified Entomologist, is Staff Entomologist serving a broad range of technical service needs for IFC's food industry clients. With nearly forty years of experience, Jerry's career has focused exclusively in the fields of entomology and pest management in academic and several industrial settings. Since 1937, IFC is the only national pest management company focused solely on the food industry. For more information, visit www.indfumco.com or call 800-477-4432.

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

- Benjamin Franklin



One Focus.
Food Industry
Pest Management.™

INDFUMCO.COM

