

## eBook Series

# EPISODE ONE: MICE - FOCUS ON FOOD PREP BUSINESSES



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## eBook Series. Rodent Control

Mice control is important because Auckland's businesses of restaurants, cafeterias and institutional kitchens is where food is stored, prepared, served and spilled, there are plenty of opportunities for mice to make a home.

It's important to know what your options are in treating spaces like these. What follows are some techniques that can prove useful.

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## >> INSPECT FIRST

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Begin with an inspection.

Check the entire food-service facility — dining areas, kitchens, storage, receiving — and make notes when you see evidence of mice e.g. mice dirt, chewing marks and trails. Mice feel the cold, so check all areas of warmth, e.g. hot water cylinders and fridge motors.

Inspect the exterior, too, especially the perimeter. Grassy areas of undeveloped land next to your property are excellent for generating large numbers of mice. Note areas where rodent-proofing is needed e.g. gaps under fire doors. Inspection of stored food stuffs is important as food stored in plastic packets or in accessible storage bins will attract mice.

Following a thorough inspection take note of the following three types of areas that the mice are using:

- i. access point(s)
- ii. trail(s); and
- iii. nest(s)



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## >> TRAPS

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Depending on the type of food production business, snap traps and live capture traps can be a better choices than bait in food-service establishments. These methods have the advantage of having the dead mouse "in hand," and you won't have to worry about decaying carcasses inside of wall voids.

Place snap traps inside tamperproof stations so that non target animals and children are not at risk. Where possible use inconspicuous locations



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## >> RODENTICIDES

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Sometimes bait is not the best option for food production businesses for a few reasons. Firstly some businesses produce food in extremely clean conditions e.g. Dairy and cannot risk contamination by bait. Secondly, food is plentiful in food-service establishments, especially in the kitchen and storage areas. Bait cannot compete with your extremely delicious food or stored food stuffs.

If you do use bait, make sure it is in a tamperproof station that locks the bait down. This as the bait can't be carried off and non-target animals do not have access. Use professional baits from high quality manufacturers.

One example of this type of company, is Bell Labs from the USA. They only make rodent products. That's all they do! There's a reason professional Pest Control companies use these types of products, because they work- consistently!

Avoid supermarket or hardware products as they are not as palatable to mice and reduce your chances of success.

**RODENTICIDES CONTINUED**

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## >> **RODENTICIDES** continued

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Don't use rodenticide tracking powders or grains or pellets in food areas. This as mice can transport these treatments onto food or to food prep surfaces.

Ensure that all access points are baited, as often "hungry" mice come in via these points attracted by the kitchens' pleasant odours. Stations placed at access points will offer the mice bait as they enter the kitchen.

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## >> **MONITORING BLOCKS**

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Non-toxic bait monitoring blocks are a poor choice for the average food business. The exception is where the business is in a multi-level building, and the source of the mice needs to be established.

Some NON toxic monitoring baits have a special additive that makes rodent droppings glow bright green under black light. Helpful for working out where your mice are coming from.



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## >> STRATEGIC PLACEMENT

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Use information from inspection to determine placement of controls, namely access points, trails and nests.

Place controls along suspected trails that the mouse uses to get from its nest site to its favourite food source. From there place controls next to access points, and then at intervals of approximately 3 metres around the perimeter of the interior of building/business.

Best consider placing controls around the stored food too as mice will gravitate there naturally.

Mice are confident climbers, so inspect ceilings, crawlspaces and voids. Avoid treating areas directly over food preparation areas. Mostly mice are only found in ceilings when they are present in high numbers.

If you use bait outside in tamperproof stations make sure the bait is inside sealed plastic bags to protect it from slugs and snails. Check controls on a regular timetable. Replace bait and remove dead mice. Keep records of where and when controls are placed and how often they're serviced.

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## >> USEFUL INFO & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks for taking the time to read this eBook - I hope you found it useful. The content for this article was taken from PCT Magazine and has been adapted by ACES pest control.

Look out for future ebooks in this series, we will be publishing a range of articles to help you cope with different pest challenges throughout the year - topics such as flies, fleas, wasps etc will be covered and we will aim to provide you with practical advice to help keep your home and business pest free.

### **ACES pest control** - Experts in Pest Control.

However, should you need profession help to sort out pest issues and infestations, please do not hesitate to contact the ACES team - we are always happy to help.

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