

## SAFE MOUSE CONTROL IN A GRAIN STORE

### Red Tractor Training

Anyone administering rodenticide in grain stores must have read and understood this document to demonstrate their ability to carry out the work. Training must be documented in the individuals training record.

All grain stores must be rodent proofed as much as possible although even new, purpose-built grain stores can be susceptible to mouse infestations. Unlike rats, mice are notoriously difficult to control within grain stores. The issue being that once in a grain store, mice do not need to leave the store to access a water supply to survive and breed. An established female can have up to 56 young each year and these young themselves can begin to breed at 6 - 8 weeks of age.

In 2019 the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) updated its position on permanent baiting in internal areas such as grain stores. It states

*'Indoor permanent baiting is generally conducted against house mice using tamper-resistant bait stations that are designed only to permit access to the bait by animals that are the same size as mice or smaller. Such a practice, when conducted following all best practice guidance carries very little risk because: 1) few non-target animals can get direct access to the bait, 2) only small quantities of biocidal product are used in the bait placements, 3) non-target animals are usually virtually absent from indoor baited areas. Also, given that the risks to human and animal health are greater in the case of rodent infestations indoors, because of their proximity to humans and the areas frequented by them, the risk-benefit calculation is balanced strongly in favour of conducting indoor permanent baiting, where there is risk of reinvasion of disinfested premises.'*

*'The balance between the risks and benefits of indoor permanent baiting for the control of persistent house mouse infestations is weighed significantly towards the use of this technique because the risks to wildlife are consequently less.'*

In April 2022 the Red Tractor Combinable Crops Technical Advisory Committee concluded that the standards should allow toxic rodenticides to be used in grain stores where grain was being stored if the criteria in VC.3 is met which ensures the risk of crop contamination is kept to a bare minimum and food safety is the priority. The criteria are as follows:

- There is a perceived need to bait for mice within the store based on a current mouse infestation or if there is a history of mouse infestation in the store
- Only approved gel / paste products are used
- Lockable, identifiable bait boxes are used, and they are secured to the building
- Red Tractor's guidance / training document must be read and understood by the farmer or farm staff undertaking internal mouse baiting before bait is laid. The training must be documented in the individual's training records. This does not apply to professional vermin control contractors although they must follow the guidance laid out within this document.

Your assessor will check the stores physically and review the paper records to ensure the guidance is being followed and the standard is being met.

Bait boxes used must be either strong plastic or metal, be identifiable, be tamper-proof and designed as such that they can only be opened with a key. All boxes must be clearly identified on a store baiting map, showing their exact positions within buildings.



*Lockable bait box*



*Bait box key*



*Wire tether for fixing to walls*

All bait used in these internal boxes should be gel or paste bait or gel formulation only - these cannot fall out. Do not use grain bait, kibbled grain, blocks, or wax blocks in stores as they can be chewed and spilt when damaged, causing contamination to the stored grain. Sachets of paste / gel are also unsuitable as they can also fall out or be removed from the bait box by mice.

The gel / paste products must be the type that can be applied into the bait box with a caulking gun.



*A caulking gun*



*Applying a paste product into a bait box.*

**A list of approved products that includes gel / paste products hosted by HSE can be accessed at:**

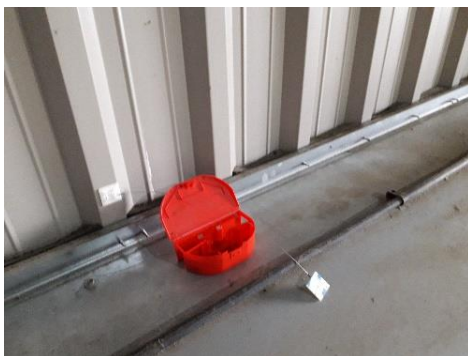
**<https://www.hse.gov.uk/biocides/uk-list-active-substances.htm>**

It is best practice to apply the product into the bait boxes well away from the stored grain to avoid potential contamination.

When applied in the bait box the product should stick to the inside. Once closed you should be able to shake the box, and nothing should leak, fall out or should be heard rattling inside.



All bait boxes should be lockable and secured to the building with steel wire or fastened by another long-term method e.g. screwed / bolted to the building.



Using the tethering method, the closing of the box traps the wire but when open the box can be removed for refilling without having to refix the wire tether.

The boxes must not be placed in the grain itself or where there is a risk of them being crushed or displaced by vehicles when loading and unloading the store.

It is suggested that the best location for the bait boxes to control mice is on the wall tops around the edge of the grain as long as there is sufficient space for the boxes to sit safely and they can be secured to the building.