

BIRD & RODENT CONTROL MEASURES



Disease causing organisms can be carried on the fur, feathers or feet of some animals. Birds and rodents can spread diseases for a short time and distance and can also contaminate feed and water sources with their urine and/or feces.

Control programs should be implemented to minimize their numbers and the risk of disease spread on your farm.

■ Eliminate openings for rodents or birds to enter, especially feed storage or processing areas.

- Seal any opening greater than ¼ to ½ inch with a durable material such as steel wool packed tightly into openings.
- Use materials that cannot be easily gnawed or pecked through such as concrete, sheet metal, wire mesh, aluminum or brick. Plastic sheeting, wood, rubber will not be adequate.
- Check openings around augers, pipes and wires. Use mortar, masonry or metal collars in these areas.
- Doors, windows and screens should fit tightly. The distance between the bottom of the door and threshold should not exceed ¼ inch.
- Drainage pipes or sewage systems may be used by rodents as routes to enter buildings. Equip floor drains with metal grates (openings less than ¼").

■ Remove potential hiding, resting and nesting sites.

- Equipment (e.g., refrigerators, powerwashers, etc.) should be raised and easily movable to allow for easy cleaning behind and underneath them.
- Sacked feed should be stacked on pallets with adequate space around and under them to allow easy inspection for signs of rodent activity and trap or bait placement.
- Rats can burrow and nest under feed bunks placed directly on the ground. Use of a concrete base around feed bunks can eliminate habitat.
- Maintain the water level in livestock waterers so it is deep enough that birds cannot stand in it.
- Hanging strips of heavy plastic vertically in doorways of buildings will allow machinery and people to pass through but keeps birds out. This will not prevent rodent entry.
- Cover the undersides of rafters with netting to exclude birds from nesting sites.

■ Eliminate potential food sources.

- Store feed in well sealed containers (preferably metal with tight fitting lids).
- Use covered feeders that exclude birds.
- Clean up any spilled feed immediately.

■ Proper disposal of garbage and dead animals is a very important part of rodent control.

■ Establish a rodent barrier around buildings.

- A 3 foot wide weed free area with a gravel rock perimeter can be used to prevent weed growth and discourage rodents from burrowing.
- Gravel (at least 1 inch diameter) should be placed in a band at least 3 foot wide and 6 inches deep.

■ Trapping is an effective way to control rodents.

- Proper placement of traps and baits is important. Set traps close to walls, behind objects, in dark corners, in places where rodent activity is evident.
- Use talc or flour patches to track where rodents are active.

■ Baiting may be used to control rodents.

- When using rodenticide baits, first read the label carefully and fully follow the directions.
- Use the amount of bait indicated on the package. Requirements differ between products.
- Protect baits from the weather.
- Be sure baits are not accessible to children, farm or domestic animals and birds.
- Inspect baits regularly. Check often for dead rodents and burn or bury those you find.

■ Other control measures are available, but beyond the scope of this document. Contact a wildlife pest control operator in your state for further assistance.

■ Check local legislation for allowable bird control measures. Many birds are protected by state and/or federal law.

For More Information

Pierce RA. Bait Stations for Controlling Rats and Mice. University of Missouri Extension. <http://muextension.missouri.edu/explore/agguidees/wildlife/g09444.htm>.

Brittingham MC, Falker ST. Controlling birds around farm buildings. Pennsylvania State University Extension. <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/pdfs/uh126.pdf>.

See T. Controlling rodents. North Carolina State University Extension. <http://www.thepigsite.com/Featured Article/Default.asp?Display=1015>.

Baker RO, Bodman GR, Timm RM. Rodent- proof construction and exclusion methods. University of Nebraska. http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/wild/pdf/wildilfe/RODENT_PROOF_CONSTRUCT.PDF.