



# Target

# Farm

# Action

A monthly digest of practical advice for pig farmers from BPEX

## Are insects bugging you?

### Are you having problems with blocked feed pipes, machinery problems or structural damage?

If so, it could be the result of an insect invasion. Samples taken from one pig unit in December revealed two different species were at the root of the problems.

The feed pipe systems were regularly getting blocked and the small moths found nearby were suspected to be the source. The moths and their larvae were identified by Nottingham University as part of the Pyralidae family of moths, more commonly known as warehouse or flour moths (*Ephestia kuehniella*).

These moths feed on stored cereals and grains so are commonly found in feed pipes or mills. The females can lay up to 700 eggs

which attach to grains of feed and they can hatch within three days at 80°F (27°C).

The hatched larvae have spots on the body which produce silken tubes, which can clog feed pipes and restrict feed flow. However, the problem doesn't end here as, once mature, the larvae spin cocoons within which they develop into reddish-brown pupae.

The larvae and eggs can prove very difficult to eliminate in a farm environment as extensive cleaning is required. Action should include removing all old feed and cleaning feed pipes as thoroughly as possible. Another option is to install pheromone traps. These attract insects even at low densities and are species specific. The traps are widely available and generally cost just a few pounds. Type 'flour moth traps' into an inter-

net search engine for a range of options.

The second species found on the unit were small beetles identified as *Dermestes maculatus*, or Hide beetles. These were burrowing into the wood causing considerable structural damage. They feed on dead material so removal of dead rodents, old bird nests and dead insects will help to control them.

Pay particular attention to false ceilings as dead flies tend to build up behind them. The larvae can climb 24-36 feet where they will bore through and create honeycomb structures, for example in wood, cork, plaster, foam insulation and PCP treated wood.

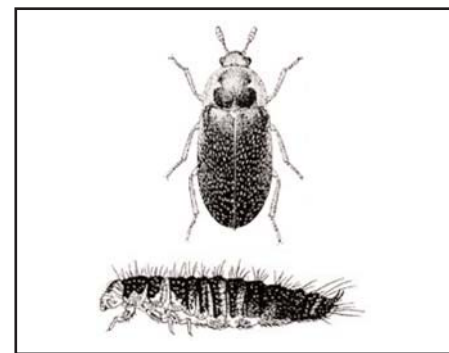
A professional pest adviser can help with further control of these beetles and will probably recommend application of a residual insecticide.



Flour moths are commonly found in feed pipes



Pheromone traps can be effective even at low densities



Hide beetles can cause considerable structural damage

## Interest free energy loans

Pig producers should try and snap up one of the unsecured, interest free loans now available from the Carbon Trust. As of February 1 2010 all farmers are eligible for a loan to help upgrade to more energy-efficient equipment.

The Carbon Trust expects £12 million of funding to be offered, saving farmers and growers £4 million per year in energy costs. The loans are designed to pay for themselves through direct energy savings provided over one to four years. After the loan is repaid, farmers will make direct savings on their energy costs, as well as cutting the carbon footprint of what they produce.

Upgrading heating and ventilation

controls is one of the energy efficiency upgrades the Carbon Trust loans will fund. In livestock farms, this typically costs £3,000, and saves over £4,000 / 23 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

Loans of between £3,000 and £20,000 will be available on a first come, first served basis. For more information please visit <http://www.carbontrust.co.uk/loans>.

There is more advice from BPEX on energy saving and renewable energy opportunities on the BPEX Environment Hub: <http://www.bpex.org.uk/PracticalAdvice/environmentHub/default.aspx>.

Alternatively call Nigel Penlington at BPEX on 0247 647 8797.

## Managing mycotoxins

Mycotoxins in feed or straw can be a threat to both breeding and finishing herd performance. Spring storage of feedstuffs is very important and now is a good time to check out your grain store. If you are a home mixer, bear in mind that grain infestation with weevils or mites may be on the increase along with possible toxins as the grain temperature starts to rise.

From early April onwards it may be necessary to do weekly grain store inspections and take appropriate action if needed for cleaning, maintenance or fumigation of storage areas.

For more practical advice on mycotoxin control look up Action for Productivity 8: 'Feed and straw management to reduce the risk of mycotoxins' at <http://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk/archives/bpex/>

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