

# TEACHING TIPS

## KEEPING PESTS OUT



### Learner/worker Objectives:

- To understand that pests can contaminate food.
- To learn how to keep pests out of the kitchen.

### Introduction

Pests can carry and spread germs.

Pests like rodents (mice and rats) and insects (flies and cockroaches) can carry and spread germs:

- In their urine or droppings.
- In their saliva or their mouths.
- On their hair or feet.

### The Food Connection

Germs can spread from pests to food.



*Ask how pests can spread germs to food.*



**Pests can damage food by tearing packages.**



**Pests contaminate food or food contact surfaces with:**

- urine
- droppings
- body parts



**It's important to learn how to spot pests and keep them away from food.**

### Keep Food Safe

Keep pests away from food.

We can control pests without using a lot of chemicals by practicing **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**. As part of IPM, there are four rules that will help you find pests and keep them away from food.



*Distribute and Review*

*"Keep Pests Out of Your Kitchen."*

There are some steps you can take each day. Other problems may need help from a supervisor or custodial staff.



**Do not let pests into the kitchen.**

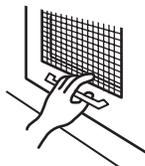
Pests can get into the kitchen from food deliveries, open doors and windows and smaller openings in cracks and holes. They are also attracted to food left in open trash containers.

### To keep pests out:

#### YOU CAN:

- Inspect all deliveries.
- Keep doors and windows closed.
- Keep lids on trash containers.

### TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR:



If you see holes in walls, screens or door seals.

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## TEACHING TIPS FOR KEEPING PESTS OUT

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### 2 Do not give pests water.

Most of these pests don't need a lot to drink. Keep them away from a source of water and drink.

#### YOU CAN:

- Wipe up spills right away.
- Keep the kitchen and storage areas clean and dry.
- Clean mops after each use. Hang mops on a rack above the floor drain.

#### TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR:

If you see: faucets that drip; drains that are clogged or slow; leaks and other plumbing problems.

### 3 Do not give pests a place to live.

Pests can set up housekeeping in a lot of different places. By keeping the store rooms clean and removing trash regularly, most pests will not be able to live in the kitchen area.

#### YOU CAN:

- Check food storage areas for signs of pests:
  - droppings or urine stains
  - nesting materials such as torn paper
  - gnawing marks
  - egg cases
- Put paper products and cardboard boxes in dry places. Keep them 6" off the floor and away from the wall.
- Throw away cardboard packaging (or recycle) as soon as you can.
- Keep trash (and recycle) rooms clean and dry.
- Keep floor drains, strainers and grates clean.

#### TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR:

- If you see any signs of pests.
- If you see cracks in walls or around pipes.
- If you see trash containers or Dumpsters are not covered.
- If trash is not removed according to schedule.

### 4 Do not feed pests.

Most of these pests don't need a lot to eat.

It's important to keep pests away from food and keep food areas and equipment clean.

#### YOU CAN:

- Keep all food covered.
- Rotate stock, use FIFO (First in First out).
- NOT mix older foods with new foods.
- Rinse food containers before you throw them away.
- Keep food preparation equipment cleaned and sanitized.
- Sweep and mop floors each day.
- Keep grease traps and vents clean.
- Keep garbage containers lined and covered; empty them each day.
- Put garbage in plastic bags and seal them before you put them in the Dumpster.
- Keep garbage cans clean.

#### TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR:

If your garbage containers or Dumpsters are not clean.

**If pests continue to be a problem after all other steps have been tried - tell your supervisor.** Do not use a pesticide. Under Massachusetts law schools and child care centers are not allowed to apply any pesticides, unless they have a pesticide license. Tell your supervisor about any pests you see.

### Resources and Fact Sheets

Use the following resources and fact sheets for more information:

- UMass Extension Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program <https://ag.umass.edu/integrated-pest-management/about>
- UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program <https://ag.umass.edu/nutrition>
- Massachusetts Partnership for Food Safety Education [www.mafoodsafetyeducation.info](http://www.mafoodsafetyeducation.info)