

Scope

This policy is intended to outline some of the causes of an infestation as well as the ways in which it can be handled and/or mitigated in order to reduce the risk of an infestation.

Overview

Infestation is a common natural occurrence within any food industry that supplies raw materials, most infestation incidents are due to poor storage conditions, housekeeping, poor stock rotation and lack of inspections.

Infestations can occur at any point of the process even in packaged stock and even in stock held by customers/consumers.

The best before on products is about the perishability of products and not infestation. Infestation can occur at any time within the life of a product and is naturally occurring, if products are maintained and stored correctly, it will lower the risk of an infestation.

Insects such as Moth larvae can eat their way into packaging and can become an infestation issue in any warehouse/store, Moths lay small clustered eggs on packaging or the surrounding area and can hatch as soon as a few days but can take up to a couple of weeks depending on the temperature of where the products are stored, the larvae at this stage will eat their way into the plastic or find an opening to get to the closest food source.

Infestation can also easily migrate from product to product and so if an infestation is found make sure to check all surrounding products as it may not have occurred where initially seen and the issue may be with another product kept in a similar area.

POLICY

1. If an infestation is found please contact our office and/or your account manager immediately upon detection of any infested stock with images and details of the issue, the quantity of bags, the batch information and best before dates as we use these to track the production dates and find our kept samples.
2. If Infestation has occurred whilst in the customers possession, JJ will only take liability after a full investigation has been done and will be on a case-by-case basis, depending on the level of Infestation and the results of the investigation.
3. If infestation has occurred within the first 3-month period of the customer taking receipt of the products, we will advise whether the stocks will be uplifted or if it can be disposed of. If stock is to be uplifted back to our site, please be advised that a credit note will only be issued once Johnston & Jeff Ltd. has received the stocks back and an initial check has been completed and if it is found that the infestation as occurred from our premises.
4. Anything older than 3 months from the date of receipt by the customer is the sole responsibility of the customer.

(3 Months is given as this is beyond the maximum period within which incubation of any insect will have occurred and hatched. Infestation would occur within the first two months, therefore anything older than 3 months with the customer is then due to internal infestation with the customer storage or other products.)

5. If an infestation is discovered, depending on the circumstances, Johnston & Jeff Ltd. is happy to work with our customers to get the stocks uplifted, fumigated and returned to the customer. (This will be agreed and dealt with on a case-by-case basis)

Processes/Procedures

The risk of Infestation should be low and can be reduced if the right checks /steps are completed upon arrival and receipt of any goods. Below are some recommendations we suggest on Inspections and good storage conditions.

Intake

1. Thorough checks on Intake are vital to lower the risk of any infested stock entering the warehouse/stores and should be reported immediately.
2. Check the environment of the container, is it clean, is there any off taints within.
3. Check the delivered stock, is there any signs of insect sightings or damage.
4. Stock that enters the warehouse/store that is infested can possibly infest any other stock that is being held within the warehouse and vice versa, so make sure to inspect the surrounding area where the goods are to be stored.

Temperature and Humidity

Temperature and Humidity Control: Keep a close eye on temperature and humidity levels in your warehouse. Pests are less likely to thrive in an environment that is neither too hot nor too humid.

1. **Avoid extreme heat and humidity-** store the product in a cool dry area below 14C.
2. **High humidity-** Pests need moisture to survive, keep product away from any areas that may have cracks. Maintain floors and walls so that they're free of cracks where moisture can collect. Do not store product outside when it is wet or in direct sunlight.

Good Housekeeping

Cleanliness Is Key: Maintaining a clean environment is fundamental in pest prevention. Here are key cleaning strategies:

1. **Sweeping and Mopping:** Regularly sweeping and mopping floors removes food particles and spills that may attract pests. Pay special attention to corners and under storage racks.
2. **Empty Waste Bins:** Empty waste bins frequently and ensure they have secure lids. Rotting waste is a magnet for pests.
3. **Storage Rack Cleaning:** Periodically clean and sanitize storage racks, removing dust, debris, and potential pest habitats.
4. **Food Handling Areas:** If your warehouse stores food products, maintain stringent cleanliness in these areas. Implement a “first in, first out” system to minimize the chances of expired or damaged goods attracting pests.

Regular Inspections and rotation

1. **Regular Inspections:** Regular inspections are the first line of defence against pest infestations. Inspection teams should look for signs of pest activity. These inspections should cover all areas of the warehouse, including those less frequented.
2. **Rotation:** Use the oldest stock first to minimize the chances of expired or damaged goods attracting pests.

Conclusion

Infestation is a naturally occurring issue that can occur at any point in the handling of the products. However, if the above steps are followed then the risk of Infestation can be reduced and mitigated as much as possible. If an infestation is identified then immediately check the surrounding area and move the products to an isolated area away from other goods and reach out to Johnston & Jeff when appropriate at which point we will advise on the best steps to take.