QM 13.2.9 Management of Pests and Vermin

Introduction

The company has established, documented and implemented a pest control system for the site, which is maintained as part of the operational programmes in order to meet the requirements of the Food Packaging Safety Quality Management System and ensure the safe production of products.

Procedure

The company operates a proactive system for the prevention of contamination of products by pests and ensures there are effective controls and processes in place to minimise pest activity. This includes ensuring an integrated pest management system is effectively implemented. This procedure is used in conjunction with written Prerequisites and HACCP plans to ensure adequate pest control. The Hazards Associated with pests are the contamination of Food Packaging by bacteria from pests and their droppings and also unwanted contamination of Food Packaging with pests' bodies, eggs, hairs or droppings. At the factory design stage measures are taken to reduce the risk of contamination by aiming to restrict the access of pests on site.

Raw materials, packaging and finished products are stored so as to minimise the risk of infestation. Where stored product pests are considered a risk, appropriate measures are included in the control programme. All incoming goods are inspected for pest infestation. Process equipment handling raw materials vulnerable to infestation is identified and scheduled inspection undertaken. All buildings are required to be adequately proofed as described in QM Infrastructure and Work Environment Prerequisites. Waste is managed as per procedures QM Waste Disposal and QM Waste Management to prevent the accumulation of debris and waste on site to prevent the attraction of pests. In order to prevent risk of contamination no animals are allowed on site.

The company employs a Pest Control Association registered pest control contractor to implement a pest control programme and maintain the site free from pest contamination.

The contract agreement defines:

- company and contractor key contact personnel

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control reporting procedure is in place such that any incident or sign of pest activity is immediately reported to the Technical Manager and any potential product affected is quarantined. The Technical Manager maintains a log of pest sightings and the action taken by the pest controller.

The log is maintained in the pest control file and includes:

- Date
- Time
- Type of pests observed
- Actions taken
- Person taking the action and signature

The log is used to identify and eliminate areas where pest activity is observed and to document corrective Actions taken. In the event of an infestation the Technical Manager identifies, evaluates and authorises the release of any potential product affected by the pests. The Field Biologist reviews the log each quarter to identify trends in pest activity. A report of findings is submitted to the Technical Manager for review.

The pest control contractor provides reports for all visits and advises on any trends and corrective actions. Department Managers are allocated corrective or preventative actions which must be completed within the agreed timescale.

Verification of Pest Control Activities

The Technical department and line management are required to conduct documented audits including pest control throughout the site at monthly intervals. Monthly Hygiene and housekeeping audits include inspection for signs of pest activity and also any pest proofing issues requiring attention. Pest Control activities are also verified by quarterly field biologist inspection reports.

The Technical Manager regularly reviews the results of pest control inspections in order to assess and analyse trends and consider the need for further prevention measure or corrective actions. This review is carried out as a minimum annually but also in the event of an infestation.

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