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RATS

IN THE STABLE

A livestock farm that is free of rats and mice is a utopia. Stables are strong magnets for rodents and keeping them sealed is an impossible task.

The challenge is to control the rodent population on farms.

Power cables damaged by rats and mice can cause various electrical malfunctions, or worse, stable fires. On top of this, uninvited stable residents eat an average of 18 kilos of feed per year and can spread diseases. Rodent control in such environments is not a luxury as rat pairs raise about eighty offspring a year.

Decoy boxes and rat clamps

Current practice is to use decoy boxes with food and rat clamps outside barns. Jars with poisonous bait are placed in the buildings at strategic places. Director Joan Rooijackers of pest control company APC estimates that in 70% of the cases the 'maintenance' is done by the livestock farmer himself. The future will be focused on preventative measures. From 2023, farmers will be able to use bait feed with select rodenticides in their stables.

“Preventing horror stories”

Professional pest controllers will continue to work with rodenticides to prevent horror stories, according to Meerburg. Pest control must be top of farmers' list, as sealing off stables is not a practical solution. Rooijackers suggests using the knowledge of specialists in new construction plans. This creates a more hygienic environment and makes pest control much easier.

Poison-free in 2025

As a specialized pest control company, APC is anticipating a poison-free future. “If legislation changes, you have to respond to that and not dig your heels in the sand”, says Rooijackers.



“APC is already using rodents' sense of smell through a special blend of essential oils in fragrance jars that keeps them from accessing the stables.”

From tests at dairy and poultry farms, after a year the rodent pressure decreased considerably. APC aims for poison-free in rodent control by 2025. “We want to restore the biological balance of livestock farms with a range of resources that nature suggests”.

Property structure

Rooijackers emphasises that upkeep helps; keeping the grass short, not littering and using plants. “Ensure that birds of prey have hunting ground and nesting opportunities near company buildings. That helps to restore the pest balance and bring more biodiversity”, he advises.

Monitoring is essential

Monitoring the number of rats and mice and the amount of bait is necessary to analyse population changes. All findings are recorded in detail with a QR coding system for each bait box, rat clamp and food pot. APC makes digital logbooks, so farmers can see what they are doing on their farm. In between their regular checks, users can add their own findings online.

#TheGoodPestManager@Work

This series of fact sheets showcases sustainable pest management products and practices. They provide snapshots of the good pest manager at work.

From vector mapping via innovative software to digital rodent traps and heat treatments, pest management is a unique and multi-faceted service sector that helps secure hygiene and by so-doing contributes significantly to public health. It is increasingly important today in dealing with the effects of climate change which are resulting in a growing incidence of plagues of insects and rodents.

These case studies capture the essence of the thought leadership and business acumen of this service sector, not only through the digitalisation of services but equally through a concern to respect and take care of the environments where infestations occur. In all instances presented, innovation is at the core of these sustainable business practices.

CEPA is proud to champion innovative and sustainable pest management practices that can be used on the ground. It is what we call #TheGoodPestManager. Professional pest management is a service sector that does not receive broad recognition or visibility. We hope these illustrative examples will shed light on the way we operate to prevent and deal with pest infestation and the value we bring to society on a daily basis.



ABOUT CEPA

Founded in 1974, CEPA, the European pest management services trade association brings together more than 70 national associations and companies along the whole pest management chain in 23 European countries.

CEPA represents primarily the European pest management service sector, which at its core is a network of European SMEs with substantial economic growth potential. Our mission as a service sector is to contribute to the protection and assurance of the wellbeing of EU citizens especially in the context of smart, sustainable, healthy cities.

We work with a broad range of actors at local level from manufacturers to the catering sector, from hospitals to schools and other educational establishments, from retailers to public authorities, from a wide range of businesses to political institutions at all levels.

Against a backdrop of climate change increasing the presence of pests in urban environments, the sound management of overpopulated cities has never been more critical. Our sector of the service industry is leading the charge in assuring tangible, sustainable solutions for the well-being of Europe's citizens.

Rue du Trone 61,
1050 Brussels,
Belgium

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