



Oklahoma School IPM

House Mouse



The house mouse is a very adaptable animal that often lives in close association with humans. Native to Central Asia, the house mouse was brought to North America as stowaways when the continent was settled. The house mouse thrives under a variety of conditions; they are found in and around homes and commercial structures as well as in open fields and agricultural lands. They consume and contaminate food meant for humans, and their pets. Additionally, they frequently damage structures and property, and can transmit diseases.

Description: Mice are small (about 5-7 inches long, including their tail and weigh less than one ounce each) grayish rodents with relatively large ears and small black eyes.



Mice have excellent senses of taste, hearing, smell, and touch. They are able to climb most surfaces with ease and can squeeze through openings smaller than the width of a dime. House mice are "nibblers" that can eat many different foods, though they prefer seeds and grains. With an average life span of 9 to 12 months, the house mouse reaches reproductive maturity in 6 to 10 weeks. Females can have as many as ten litters of 3-6 young per year, with gestation taking only 19-20 days.

Location: Droppings, fresh gnaw marks, and a "musky" odor indicate areas where mice are active. Their nests are made from fine shredded paper or

other fibrous material. Mice are typically active at night, but can occasionally be seen during daylight hours.

Management: Effective management involves preventatives such as sanitation and exclusion in addition to population reduction such as trapping with traditional snap traps or sticky traps. Baiting is another effective population reduction measure, however it should only be performed by your school's pest control professional.

Though good sanitation will seldom completely control mice, poor sanitation is sure to attract them and will permit them to thrive in greater numbers. Exclusion is the most successful and permanent form of house mouse control. Eliminate all gaps and openings larger than 1/4 inch. Seal all cracks in exterior walls and around openings for water pipes, vents, and utility cables with metal or concrete. Doors, windows, and screens should fit tightly. Steel wool works well to plug mice holes until permanent repairs can be made.

Though mice are easily frightened by unfamiliar noises and situations, they quickly become accustomed to and ignore those things that do not cause them harm. Because of this, there is little evidence that electronic, sound, magnetic, or vibration devices of any kind will drive established mice from buildings or provide adequate control.

Dogs and cats can catch and kill mice, however, they are rarely adequate for controlling mouse populations. It is not uncommon to find mice living in close association with cats and dogs, relying on cat and dog food for nourishment.



EXTENSION