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NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:

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Controlling Pantry Pests

Stored product pests are found in almost every home at some time, especially during the warm summer months. Yet few people recognize why stored product pests occur. Many are transported into the home from a store or warehouse. Others originate in the home when susceptible items are stored for long periods of time. Finding the same insect repeatedly in the home is a good indication of a stored product pest problem.

Moths can be either pantry or fabric pests. However color patterns, size and behavior can generally help determine the food preference of the moth problem. Indian meal moth is one of the most common indoor pests. This insect is readily identified by its two-toned (tan and copper colored) wing pattern. This insect feeds on dried fruits, nuts, chocolate, powdered milk, bird seed, dog food, and a variety of grain products. Full-grown larvae are pale and cream-colored and are usually about 13 mm long (range 9-19 mm). When fully developed, Indian meal moth larvae frequently wander in search of a place to pupate, and may be found on ceilings, walls and counter tops. Although adult Indian meal moths are primarily nocturnal, they are occasionally seen flying about during the day.

Like other food-infesting moths, the Indian meal moth must be controlled by first locating and eliminating infested food products. Insecticide sprays are not always needed. Often removing an old infested bag of flour is all that is needed. For heavier infestations, pesticides can be applied to

corners and cracks around food storage areas. Pyrethrin-based foggers can provide temporary suppression of adult moths; but aerosols alone will not provide control until all infested foods are discarded. Pyrethrin, resmethrin, allethrin, and tetramethrin are common pesticides found in sprays designed for cockroach control. They are relatively safe to use in the kitchen, and can be used to treat cracks and crevices in food storage closets. If you have a pest control company that regularly services your home, ask about pheromone traps that are designed to monitor and help reduce pantry moth pests.

Numerous kinds of beetles can be found feeding on stored food and pantry items. They include weevils, cigarette and drugstore beetles, saw-toothed grain beetles, larder beetles, mealworms, and various flour beetles. These beetles feed on a wide variety of stored grains, fruits, spices, powdered milks, dried meats, or dead insects, birds, or mammals.

Controls for beetles are similar to those for pantry-infesting moths. First locate the infestation source (or sources) then seal all un-infested foods in air-tight containers such as screw-top glass, heavy plastic or metal containers.

Locating beetle infestations is often difficult. Inspect all cracks and crevices where food debris may accumulate, check food containers (many times even sealed containers may be infested inside and be loose enough to allow insects to escape), check under and around cabinet voids and appliances for spillage of grains, pet foods or other food products, vacuum and clean cabinets and doors in infested areas thoroughly. Rodent nests are sometimes the source of a persistent beetle infestation. Mice often hoard seeds and other stored products, which later become infested. Until you locate the source of the problem, the infestation will likely continue until the food source is consumed

After the source of infestation is eliminated, seal all food products that might become infested in tight containers. Ordinary metal kitchen canisters are not tight enough to exclude some insects. Tupperware containers, if air-tight, may work.

With heavy or widespread infestations, you may need to apply an

insecticide spray to empty cupboards, drawers, and pantries. All food products, utensils and containers should be removed from the treatment area before spraying. Sprays must be allowed to dry before placing clean shelf paper on the shelves and returning food items.

Pantry pest problems can usually be avoided by using all dried food within 2-4 months of purchase. Spices and other products that are to be kept for longer periods should be sealed in airtight containers. When you buy packaged foods, check that the bags or containers are well sealed. Keep food storage areas clean and clear of crumbs or food particles. Pet food is a major source of stored product pests. Be sure to store pet foods in well-sealed buckets or storage containers.

Spring Cow-Calf Seminar and Horse Management and Feeding Program

Two excellent programs will be held this week in Longview, the Annual Spring Cow-Calf Seminar and the Horse Management and Feeding Program. To preregister for these programs contact the Gregg County Extension office at 903/236-8429.

The Oil Belt Farm and Ranch Club will be hosting the annual Spring Cow-Calf Seminar on Tuesday, April 26, 2005 beginning at 6:30 p.m in the Gregg County Extension Auditorium in Longview.

Dr. Buddy Faries, Extension Veterinarian with Texas Cooperative Extension will present a program on "Cow Doctoring 101". Also on the evening program is Mr. Doug Hufstedler, with Elanco Animal Health. Mr. Hufstedler will be discussing Integrated Pest Management in External Parasite Control on Cattle.

Information on Weed Control in Pastures and Hay Meadows will be presented by Mr. Shane Colston, Agricultural Sales Representative with Estes Incorporated.

Producers with a Texas Department of Agriculture Pesticide License or Certificate will receive 2 CEU's at the conclusion of the program.

This program is sponsored by the Oil Belt Farm and Ranch Club, Longview Livestock Auction, Estes and Elanco Animal Health.

Horse Management and Feeding Program

The Gregg County Extension Agriculture Committee and the 4-H Saddle Club are

conducting a Horse Management and Feeding program to be held at Turnbow Stables in Longview on Thursday, April 28, 2005. The program will begin at 5:30 p.m. in the afternoon. Participants are encouraged to bring lawn chairs for seating. Turnbow Stables is located at the intersection of Hwy 259 and Hamby Road.

Topics for the evening seminar will include Feeding the Pleasure Horse, Keeping Your Horse Healthy and riding and training demonstrations. Speakers for the evening program are Dr. Pete Gibbs, Extension Horse Specialist with Texas Cooperative Extension and Dr. Jim Ward, DVM.

This program is sponsored by Horaney's and Cargill.

Dennis Smith can be contacted at the Gregg County Extension Office by e-mail at dq-smith@tamu.edu or telephone at: 903-236-8429.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.