

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SYMPATHY BETWEEN TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF CONTROL PROGRAMMES AND INDUSTRIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

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**INTRODUCTION:** Integrated control has been defined as an ecological approach to pest control based on studies of the life systems of the pests and the ecosystems of which they are part. Man is obviously part of any macro-ecosystem which includes an insect species classified as a stored-product pest; therefore, if control of such a pest is indeed necessary for man's well-being, then it must follow that technical aspects of the control programme must be sympathetic, in a very wide sense, to a number of industrial, social and economic considerations. This is obviously necessary for health and environmental reasons - it is no less necessary to the adoption and implementation of technical measures which are proposed: it is the aim of this paper to examine the latter, less emotive, but vitally important consideration.

**INERTIA TO PROGRESS:** Stored-product technologists can provide technically sound, comprehensive solutions to insect problems, but, in spite of substantial understanding in government circles and in many industries regarding the desirability of controlling the pests, acceptance of recommended corrective action is often slow or incomplete. Even the well publicised awareness and concern of international authorities relating to the importance of effective protection of stored products, particularly staple foods, against quantitative or qualitative deterioration does not always stimulate the necessary response.

There are fairly obvious reasons for such inertia and these have been widely recognized by storage technologists, particularly by those who work at the interface between science and commerce. In view of the importance of this impediment to adoption and comprehensive application of the results of storage studies, it is somewhat remarkable that little progress appears to have been made in the development of extension methodology sympathetic to the idiosyncracies of the task.

Insect pests of stored products seldom cause problems which are as immediately spectacular as those caused by many pests of field crops. Indeed, many common problems associated with administration and execution of almost any business tend to command a higher commercial priority in the view of the businessman than pest infestation control. The major obstacle to adoption of recommended technical control action is related to the difficulty of convincing those who must pay for and undertake the work that it is in their interest to do this - particularly as the pest hazard is often of an insidious nature.