

Update

NPMA LIBRARY UPDATE

Insert this update into the NPMA Pest Management Library, which can be purchased from the Resource Center. Phone: 703-352-NPMA (6762); Fax: 703-352-3031

NPMA Pest Management Standards for Food Plants: The Future of Pest Management

Background

Effective January 1, 2007, the industry Pest Management Standards for Food Plants (Standards) will become effective. This major endeavor began in 2004 and was finalized this year. The Commercial Division Steering Committee worked on developing these standards with input from the major third party auditing groups including, the American Institute of Baking (AIB), NSF Cook and Thurber, Silliker, and ASI Food Safety Consultants. This is a historic program and these Standards have been adopted by the NPMA Board of Directors.

In 2004, due to concerns about varying standards generated by third party auditing firms and events that occur during audits, NPMA convened an effort to work with the auditing groups to develop a set of minimum standards. Each auditing group seemed to be going in separate directions with conflicting and overlapping requirements. NPMA invited the four major auditing firms to a brainstorming session and all participated, sending their senior level management. A task list was developed at that time and

this list was used as a roadmap to develop the standards.

At this time, all auditing groups are considering adopting the NPMA Standards. At PestWorld 2006 in October, NSF Cook and Thurber announced they will incorporate the Standards as part of their inspection expectations for 2007.



Sections of the Standards

There are five sections of the NPMA Pest Management Standards for Food Plants:

- I. Personnel
- II. Pest Management Plan
- III. Communications
- IV. Recordkeeping and Contracts
- V. National Organic Program (NOP)

I. Personnel

This section will address pest management personnel working in food plants. These sections include provisions regarding:

- Proper Identification
- Uniforms
- Security and Criminal Background Checks
- Customer Personnel Practices
- Vehicles
- Safety
- Minimum Training Standards
- Compliance with GMPs

Worthy of note is a requirement that all technicians must be trained. The content of this training is at the discretion of the company. An exam must be passed in order to comply with the Standards, regardless of state registration, certification, or licensing. Currently, the

exam is available for testing online at www.npmatesting.org. Testing is done for a nominal fee to cover administrative costs of maintaining the testing Web site and the exam. There is a single fee and if the technician fails to pass the exam, the exam may be retaken at no additional cost. Technicians may prepare for the test by reviewing appropriate sections of "Mallis," "Truman's Scientific Guide," "NPMA's Field Guide to Structural Pests," and Purdue's food plant course, as well as any other resource appropriate to food plant servicing. In order to assist with training of future technicians, NPMA is developing a training guide which will be available to assist technicians new to food plants. This guide should be available in 2007, well after the exam is available.

II. Pest Management Plan

- Rodent Program – Exterior Property Survey
- Rodent Management Plan- Interior Survey
- Rodent Program – Facility History
- Rodent Program – Depth Matrix and Frequency of Service
- Rodent Program – Spacing of Stations
- Rodent Program – Monitoring
- Insect Program
- Birds and Wildlife
- Weed Control



- Pest Management Survey
- Quality Assurance
- Annual Training
- Storage

The third party auditors and the food industry feel that the industry is well suited to manage pests. As a result, there are few specific requirements as to how to control pests. The label, company policies, plant policies, and regulations will be followed. The group found that dealing with specific requirements for each pest will inhibit flexibility and competitive advantage. The Standards are broad and allow for each pest management firm to develop its own proprietary program within the Standards.

III. Communications

- Reporting

One area of concern for all parties has been sporadic reporting and documentation. The auditors felt that a clear set of requirements must be in place. While the Standards will address specific requirements, the method and mechanics are left to the pest management firm provided that they are within the framework of the Standards. Reporting may be either electronic or hard copy.

IV. Recordkeeping and Contracts

- Contracts
- Labels and MSDS
- Pest Sighting Log
- Licenses and Certificates
- Service Protocols and Standard Operating Procedures
- Service and Treatment Records

Necessary content of records and contracts has always been an area of intense debate. This section spells out what must be retained in order for the food plant, the pest management firm, and the auditors to be able to recreate exactly what was done in the plant. No proprietary information will be forfeited so as to avoid any competitive concerns. This section also integrates and solicits the

assistance of the plant in monitoring pest concerns between visits. Finally, the procedures will be documented in order to provide information as to the type of service under the terms of the specific contract. Many of the requirements of this section are currently mandated by state or provincial regulations.

V. National Organic Program (NOP)

- Working in NOP Facilities

An increasing number of companies are working in NOP facilities. The concept that no products for pest management may be used is a misconception. This section refers to the USDA requirements and measures which must be taken to prevent contamination of organic products by pest management activities.



Appendices

Practices are listed as a reference as is a model check sheet for inspections of food plants from a pest management perspective. The model sheet, called the NPMA-38, is not required and is provided as a service as to content, which can be used during a cursory inspection for pests and conditions conducive to pests.

Suggestions for Implementation

The Standards are easy to read and understand. Taken section by section, those who currently service food plants will find that many of the provisions are already in place in their company. One area that should be addressed immediately is to have all technicians servicing food plants tested online, as technicians may need to prepare. No credential (e.g. AIB, state certification, etc.) may be substituted for taking and passing the exam.

The Future

The Commercial Division Steering Committee is committed to ensuring that all provisions stay current. The Committee is composed of large companies, mid-sized companies, and small companies from the U.S., Canada and Mexico. In addition, product manufacturers were involved and provided input as appropriate. Also, the third party auditing groups, AIB, NSF Cook and Thurber, Silliker, and ASI Food Safety Consultants represented the auditing groups and continue to work with NPMA. Finally, the International Association of Operative Millers participated in the process and their representative continues to actively provide input.

The 2007 Standards are in place. Pest management firms should continue to notify customers in the food industry. As these are not regulations, no food plant is forced by law to adopt these; however, the response has been excellent.

In early 2007, the Commercial Division Steering Committee will begin revisions. Each autumn, the Standards will be released for the next year, effective January 1. This method will ensure that the Standards stay current with the food industry trends, pest management trends and legal requirements. Members are encouraged to provide suggestions to the committee for consideration for the next cycle.

Conclusion

The NPMA Standards for Pest Management in Food Plants have set the pace for the future of pest management and further affirm the role of our industry as protectors of public health.

To view a copy of the Standards in English or Spanish, visit www.npmapestworld.org/TechSupport/PMSFP.asp.