



PHEROMONE QUESTIONS

Pheromone trapping offers an exciting tool for pest managers to use to help solve insect problems for their customers. In order to utilize the traps and pheromones to their full potential, correct placement and interpretation of the trap is important. It is most important to always start with the insect first when you are called to solve a pest problem.

1. How long do pheromone lures last?

Most pheromone lures last for six to eight weeks indoors. They last only about four weeks outdoors due to the elements.

2. What should I do with the old lure?

Instead of removing a pheromone lure from a trap, place a new lure next to the old one in case there is any pheromone left. Record when you placed the latest lure in the trap by using a permanent marker on the trap with the date. After the trap and lures are no longer useful, place them in a sack and dump them in an outdoor waste receptacle.

3. How long will the pheromone lure stay active if the package is not opened?

Most pheromone lures will last at least two years in their original package. They can last indefinitely if placed in a freezer. It is important not to place the package of pheromone lures in a hot service vehicle for long periods. The extreme heat can start breaking down the effectiveness of the chemical pheromone.

4. Should I use the pheromone traps outdoors?

*Yes, it is important to understand what the natural outdoor stresses are on a storage structure or processing facility by monitoring outdoor pest insect activity. The Warehouse beetle (*Trogoderma variabile*) pheromone should be used outdoors instead of indoors. I also recommend using the Indianmeal moth (*Plodia interpunctella*) and Cigarette beetle (*Lasioderma serricornis*) pheromone outdoors. The Cigarette beetles can live outdoors and indoors readily in the warm summer months and pheromone traps are best used outdoors. Outdoor pheromone traps are good to reinforce to workers the necessity of closing doors and openings to prevent the entry of insects and birds.*

5. How do I interpret the results of a pheromone-trapping program?

Interpreting the data from traps can be simple. Periodically count the number of insects captured and record this on a piece of paper. This information is then compared to previous insect captures. A determination of whether the population is increasing or decreasing will then help make a decision what to do next. Nothing will replace "flashlight time" and knowledge of the pest's biology along with experiences of the structure and products being inspected.

6. Will these pheromone traps control the problem?

Generally, the pheromone trapping is designed to offer only early detection and monitoring for pest activity. However, there are many examples of how the innovative uses of pheromones can eliminate a pest population. Think of pheromone traps as 'thermometers' for pest insect activity. The more insects you capture in an area, the higher the potential risk for insect contamination to those products stored in this area.

7. How do you determine if you are getting control?

Since most pheromone traps only capture the male adult insect, this allows the female to roam the warehouse to lay eggs on finished food that could show up later in the supply chain. Determining if the female insect is mated is an excellent tool to determine what degree of control is provided by new mating disruption methods. If most of the male moths are captured and most of the female moths are unmated, then control is possible with pheromones.

