

## FEATURE

Novel ways to control



# Foam works in places others fail

An East Anglian port with a black rat infestation, has seen the problem treated by the only foam-based rodenticide on the market, as part of a trial run by Bayer. We find out how the trial, which involved Suffolk-based Command Pest Control, performed.

Uncommon in mainland UK, black rats are often present in ports because they arrive on ships coming from overseas. The port in question wishes to remain anonymous. It takes in many products, one of which is rice, and stores imports from various locations.

The site had a particular problem with black rats that feed on various foodstuffs on the journey to the UK. However, according to Richard Moseley from the Bayer Pest Solutions team, the management wasn't fully aware of the extent of the problem that had been going on for years.

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"The full extent of the black rat influx had not been identified for an extended period, and this is not uncommon. Black rats aren't often visible because they move to the highest level of any building they occupy, and don't pick up on ground level bait used to treat brown rats," says Richard.

"Once the problem was known, the current pest control contractor on the site, Command Pest Control, approached Bayer for support and we recommended using Racumin Foam as part of an integrated treatment approach," he says.

### Limited options

Before contacting Bayer, the Command team had been unsuccessful at controlling the black rats, because they had virtually nothing they could use against them. Liquid concentrate and contact dust have both been removed from the pest control armoury, meaning treatment options were very limited.

"We applied Racumin Foam very strategically," says Jeremy Barraclough from Command Pest Control. "We used the piles of loose product in the stores to enable us to reach 20-30 feet high. We then removed the tin cladding attached to the cavity to give us access to the box girders and RSJ's in the cavity where foam was applied and the cladding re-secured.

Command removed the cladding at different levels throughout the store, sprayed the foam and re-secured it.

"Treatments have proved to be very successful, although our technician has only picked up a few dead black rats himself, the number reported as collected by the grain store plant operators exceeds 30 individuals," adds Jeremy.



Evidence of rats running through the Racumin Foam can be seen here. The foam is ingested when the rats groom



Jeremy Barraclough from Command

"The problem with black rats has been ongoing here for several years and although there's still a small amount of evidence of activity in a few places, the general picture is vastly improved. The plant operators have only reported sightings of juveniles on two occasions in the last three weeks and no dead specimens have been found."

The Command onsite technician has a history of trying to treat black rats as he previously worked in Australia for a number of years, where there are more of them. He commented that this was the first time he's found an effective treatment.

Jeremy continues: "Previously we would have mixed concentrate with fruit such as pineapple chunks or bananas but with liquid and contact dust formulations removed from



Richard Moseley from Bayer

our armoury, this is no longer viable. Racumin Foam has proved to be a very good product to control this difficult species."

The foam product is versatile in the way it can be applied to rat runs anywhere. When a rat runs through the foam it gets onto the rodent's coat and then when the rat grooms itself, the active is ingested.

Awarded Best Product 2015 by **Pest** magazine readers, the product has already achieved widespread acclaim for its successes within the industry. The Pest Solutions team reported 99% positive feedback from customers spoken to at PestTech in November, with many effective treatments reported. "It's become a crucial element in the pest controlling armoury," concludes Richard Moseley.

### Lack of options brings desperate measures

Our thanks to Mark Bowron of Acheta Consulting for sending in this photograph of 'extreme trapping'. It's not something, as an auditor, he can condone, but he did have some sympathy with the predicament this pest control company found themselves in.

The site is in the main dock complex at Amsterdam, where there is a serious black rat problem. Brown rats are also present and it is likely that the trapping shown was primarily aimed against these. The range of rodenticide actives and formulations in Holland has always been more restricted than here, as have the ways in which you are allowed to use them. The contractor had resorted to these desperate measures as they simply don't have the chemical tools available to allow them to do the job that is needed.

