

HOME

Less-Toxic Pest Control Methods
for Your Home & Garden

STORED FOOD PESTS



Food Moth

INSECT TIDBITS

Mexican Jumping Beans, sometimes sold commercially, actually have a caterpillar of a bean moth inside.

Houseflies find sugar with their feet, which are 10 million times more sensitive than human tongues.

Some termite queens can lay 40,000 eggs per day and live more than 50 years.

About one-third of all insect species are carnivorous, and most hunt for their food rather than eating decaying meat.

PREVENTION

- **Always inspect food** before you store it. Insects may arrive as eggs and may not be noticeable. If grains are stored in sealed containers, contamination will be confined to that food only and not to other stored food. Beans, nuts, dried fruit, spices, flour crackers are all susceptible to these pests.
- **Keep cupboards clean** and caulk cracks where food can hide. Pests are capable of living off of spilled food in cracks.
- **Place food in a dry and cool room** if you are storing large quantities. Insects prefer moist and warm. Use desiccants or dehumidifiers to reduce humidity. You can find these in hardware stores.

LESS-TOXIC CONTROLS

- **Dispose of contaminated food.** Clean up all food in storage areas. Put food you think may be contaminated in sealed containers to stop further spread of insects.
- Use **pheromone traps** to help control large infestations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact the Central Coast Environmental Health Project (CCEHP) at (805) 963-1622 ext. 111, or the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner at (805) 681-5600. Information compiled by the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo (ECOSLO) and the San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner's office on behalf of the CCEHP.