INCORPORATING PEST MANAGEMENT INTO FOOD PLANT GOOD MANUFACTURING PRACTICES (GMP'S)

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Structural pest control has traditionally been reactive, relying on a pesticide to perform the eradication of the problem. Pro-active controls have always been viewed as expensive and without guarantee. As we edge closer to the elimination dates for methyl bromide, we are quickly seeing that there is no single pesticide that will act as an effective alternative.

Since the available alternatives are often more expensive and time consuming to apply, clients are starting to consider expansion of their preventative programs and improvements to their facilities as part of a viable reduction plan. The question is: Can methyl bromide be reduced by expanding the definition of pest management within the facility ? Re-defining pest management responsibilities to include input into sanitation, maintenance and even production is not as absurd as it may seem. In fact, the comfort of a pests surroundings have a proportionate effect on its ability to reproduce. Changes to sanitation practices, equipment design and the actual structure can significantly reduce the insects comfort level and subsequently its presence. The control is actually two fold, because the insect population is very often physically reduced by vacuuming and disturbing breeding sites. Then further reduced through the equipment or structural improvements that result in the elimination of the breeding site.

The challenge is selling this approach in an effective manner. How do you implement a program at a facility that's accustomed to relying on fumigation as the primary means of insect control ? This session will overview a step by step approach to integrating pest management operations into food plant Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP's). It will explore how to create the "in house" team that will be needed to succeed.

This session reviews the results of programs that have been instituted at several facilities, both small and large. These plants include commercial bakeries, dog food producers and flour mills. They range in age and size. Success has ranged from a 60 % to total elimination of methyl bromide for 5 years, substantiating our belief that this program can be a cost effective alternative to traditional fumigation.