

Pantry Pests

I appreciate insects, as long they are outside in their natural habitat and not bugging me. I understand that a bug has to eat. But when a pest thinks it should be in my pantry, I'm ready with an intervention!

Pantry pests like to invade food storage spaces, especially grain-based products. Here are some common insects:

- **Booklice (Psocids)** – Found in stored cereals and grains.
- **Carpet Beetles**— Found in cereals, flours, and baking mixes.
- **Cigarette Beetles**—Found in dried herbs, spices, cereals, flours, dried fruits, seeds, dried fish and meats.
- **Clothes Moths**—Found in some beverages.
- **Drugstore Beetle**—Found in pet food, seeds, flours, mixes, and spices. It is said they “eat anything except cast iron!”
- **Flour Beetle**—Any grain product, flour, kernel or cereal.
- **Indianmeal Moth**—Found in cereals, stored grains, dried fruits, chocolate, and nuts.
- **Saw-Toothed Grain Beetle**—Found in foods of vegetable origin, grain products, nuts, candies, dried milk, and dried fruits.

To prevent pests, keep storage areas clean and dry. It will be the first line of defense against pests invading your food.

Periodically clean storage areas to remove spilled food and damaged packages of food. A vacuum cleaner can easily remove spills from cracks and crevices. Eliminate hiding places by sealing cracks and crevices with putty or caulk.

If packages are damaged, inspect for insect presence or damage. If the food is still good, re-package in a sealable sturdy container. Cold-treat flours, cake mixes, and spices at 0°F for 3-7 days, making sure that the cold penetrates the material. Heat-treat beans, nuts, and whole grains by spreading them in a shallow pan and placing them in a 150°F oven for 15-20 minutes.

If you have other questions about household pests, visit the virtual bookstore at bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu to view **Household Pests of Kansas**, [publication MF3291](#). This resource can be accessed for free online or a printed book is available for purchase from K-State Research and Extension Cowley County, located in the Cowley County Courthouse, 311 E 9th, Winfield.

Source: Household Pests of Kansas

Upcoming K-State Research and Extension Events

Walk with Ease - Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays, September 1- October 15 10:30-11:15 a.m., Cowley College, 101 Galle-Johnson, Arkansas City (sign-up with Golden Tigers, 441-5225)

Dining with Diabetes, Tuesdays, November 2, 9, 16, & 30; 4:45-6:45 p.m. Arkansas City, \$25, scholarships available; call 221-5450 or 441-4565 to sign-up. Limited space available.