



HIERARCHY OF PEST MANAGEMENT STEPS IN ORGANIC

The organic regulations give clear instructions for pest management in handling facilities. In organic pest control you can't jump straight to using a pesticide; instead you progress through steps, and at each step you aim to have prevented or stopped the pest problem so that harsher materials are not needed. This prevention-first approach is key to organic pest management.



Step A: The regulations require you to use management practices to prevent pests. This is how knowledge and planning pay off. When you are planning your facility and process, take the time to understand your likely pests: where they like to live, what they like to eat, what times of the year they are looking for a home. When you understand your target pests, you can identify where they might create problems in your facility. You can then manage them through preventative techniques.

Step B: Physical control means keeping your facility pest free using devices like sounds or lights. You might set out preventative traps to catch the first arrivals. You could also use chemical repellents to keep pests away, or lures to attract them to a single spot. But, any chemical lures or repellents that you use must be consistent with the National List.

Step C: Only if these management practices in steps A and B are not effective can an organic handler use a pest control substance that is nonsynthetic or on the National List (other than a lure or repellent).

Step D: If prevention and pesticides on the National List are not effective, only then can you proceed to using a synthetic substance not on the National List, as a last resort, and then only if your certifier approves.

SOURCES CITED

USDA National Organic Program, [7 CFR §205.271](#).