

The house mouse is an elusive little thief

NEWARK, Del. — The common house mouse is not a very imposing creature. It's only about six inches long — mostly tail — weighs about three-fourths of an ounce, and spends most of its life pretty well out of sight. As a result, it often goes unnoticed, until a dog food bag stored in the garage develops a hole, or until a basket of knitting on the top shelf of a closet is suddenly turned into a mouse nursery. *Mus musculus*, the house mouse name, means "little thief," and it describes this wanderer from Asia perfectly, says Delaware Extension entomologist Frank

Boys. Today "Mus" is found from the tropics to the arctic regions all over the world. Because the mouse is so small and requires so little food, it has spread much faster than rats. It probably has the widest distribution of any mammal except man. In order to control this pest, one should know something about its breeding potential and habits, says Boys. Mice are extremely fast reproducers. Since the gestation period is only about 21 days, a single female could produce as many as 14 litters per year. Litter size averages about eight young. Females can

rebreed a few hours after giving birth. Mice also tend to have community nests, and sometimes as many as 50 young have been as found together. The size of a mouse's territory depends upon the physical arrangement of its environment and the number of other mice in the area. A mouse might not travel more than ten feet from its nest if food is close by and/or if there are many mice in the area. Some mice may spend their entire lives in a pallet of feed. House mice can survive long periods without drinking water. If their food

contains some water, they don't need any drinking water. However, water baits are readily accepted. The house mouse reacts to change by exploring it immediately, often investigating traps even though they are unbaited. In fact, your control success may be increased if you make constant changes in the mouse's environment. Changing baits or the placement of baits or traps helps. Mice also travel along walls or objects and in shadows. Where studs and sills are exposed, the mice will run on the sill and go around each stud; rats will travel on the floor. Traps and baits should be placed along their normal pathways.

and therefore aren't worth controlling. Eliminating places where mice can live, and making food unavailable to them, are the only permanent control measures. Keep the premises clean! Avoid piles of trash and accumulations of junk. Pay particular attention to the disposal of garbage and trash. Place it in garbage cans, not plastic bags, and keep them closed until the regular time for dumping. Food placed out-of-doors for pets and birds should be watched. Clean up scraps regularly, and place bird food in a mouse-proof feeder. Try to keep rodents outside buildings; close as many small openings into the building as you can. Unfortunately, mice can squeeze through a quarter-inch hole. Cover surfaces that mice could gnaw through, such as window frames and the bottom of doors, with metal flanking or hardware cloth. The small breakback and choker-loop traps can be used where there are signs of mice. In buildings, place traps along the wall, with

trigger end toward the baseboard, or against boxes or other objects at intervals of two to three feet. Many traps should be used if mice are abundant. If a mouse hole is found, place a trap about nine inches on either side. Bacon, peanut butter, gumdrops, or rolled oats are effective baits (cheese is not). A little loose bait should be placed under the trigger to catch mice skillful at robbing traps. A string or light wire from the trap to some nearby object will prevent a prowling cat from carrying the trapped mouse away, and will also keep a mouse caught by the tail or foot from crawling into hiding.

If you use poisoned bait, be sure to prepare a lethal dose, as a sublethal dose will only make the mouse sick, and it will avoid the bait thereafter.

In cases of heavy mouse infestations, after all control efforts on your part have failed, contact a reputable pest control operator, preferably a member of a state or national pest control association.

\$\$ ATTENTION \$\$

LIQUID MANURE TANKS DISCOUNTED NOW FOR BIG DOLLAR SAVINGS

2250 & 3000 Gallon Slingers,
All Sizes Vacuum Tanks, Agitator
Filler Pumps, and Plowdowns Available.
Don't miss this one-time offer to buy the
top quality tanks at discounted savings\$.
PH: 717-263-3505

If you're not sure whether you have more than one mouse in your dwelling, look for small holes in walls and doors, for tiny droppings on floors and rafters, and for feeding signs. When you see mice scurrying for cover as you enter the house, you know you have a problem, says Boys. Don't fall under the common delusion that mice don't do much damage

CCC gives loan summary

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) had \$5,486,531,000 invested in commodity loans and inventories on October 31, according to Ray Fitzgerald, Executive Vice President, CCC, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Loans outstanding totaled \$4,424,816,000 and inventories \$1,061,715,000. A year earlier, CCC had total investment of \$4,720,076,000 including \$3,700,925,000 in

loans outstanding and inventories of \$1,019,151,000. Farmer-owned grain reserve program balances as of October 31, 1978, consisted of wheat, 388,320,386 bushels valued at \$877,561,126 and feed grains, 410,935,124 bushels worth \$748,568,488. Applicable storage payments amounted to \$256,997,217.

New loans made for storage facilities and drying equipment during October 1978 amounted to \$150,259,910, as compared with \$74,910,126 for October 1977. Loans outstanding under this program as of October 31, 1978, compared with October 31, 1977, amounted to \$933,855,121 and \$301,978,913, respectively.

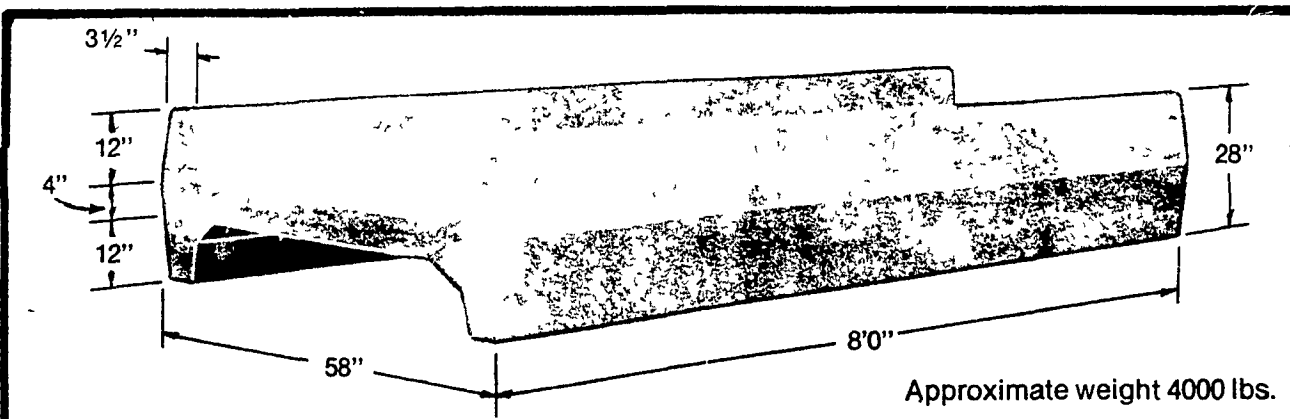


OLLENBERGER

CONCRETE

"H" TYPE FEED BUNKS

R. R. 2
Chambersburg, Pa. 17201
Phone 717-264-9588



Featuring

- Large Capacity
- Steel Reinforced
- Movable — for future expansion
- Strong enough to support a roof and feeder
- No corners to retain spoiled feed

INSTALLATION OF BUNKS

We have the necessary equipment to handle and install these heavy bunks. Customer shall make roadway to feed lot passable for our delivery truck.

SNOJAX

CLEARLY, THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT SNOWSLIDES

PAT PENDING
SEND \$1.00 FOR PPD. SAMPLE

- INVISIBLE
- NO ROOF STAINS
- EASILY INSTALLED
- INEXPENSIVE

SNOJAX
BOX 3098 SHIREMANSTOWN, PA 17011
Phone (717) 761-1863