

PESTS

Rules change on rodents

Don't be tripped up by new rules on how you are allowed to get rid of rat infestations in open spaces which are due to come into effect next year

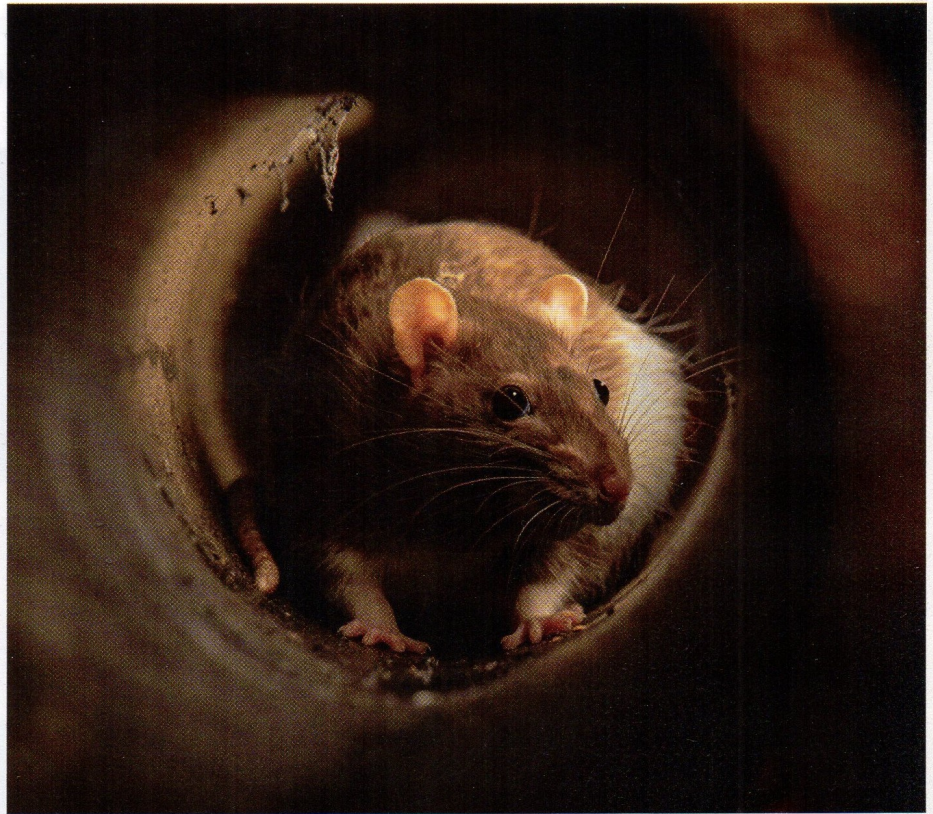
Changes to the way that rat infestations can be controlled in open areas of the farm away from buildings will be coming into force next year.

In June 2023, it was announced that authorisation for use of products containing difenacoum and/or bromadiolone in 'outdoors (open areas)' sites would be withdrawn, meaning that no second generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGAR)-containing products will have authorisation for use in exposed open areas.

SGAR-containing products will, however, still have authorisation to be used in areas designated 'indoors' and 'outdoors (around buildings)'.

The sale of products containing difenacoum and/or bromadiolone for use at 'outdoors (open areas)' sites will end on 4 July 2024.

There will be a use-up period and use in 'open areas' can continue up until 31 December 2024.



RAT INFESTATIONS

This means that as of 1 January 2025, using SGARs to treat rat infestations that are not associated with a building will be illegal. From then SGARs can only be used against rodents either living inside buildings, living outside buildings but known to be moving into them, or those reasonably anticipated to do so.

Products containing cholecalciferol (vitamin D3) can still be used in 'open areas' and away from buildings. However, as it is assumed that the vast majority of rodent infestations on farms are associated with a building, effective treatment will still be available.

One of the main targets of the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) is to reduce SGAR residues in non-target wildlife. Rodenticide residues are found in around 80% of tested barn owls, a figure that has remained static for a number of years.

It is thought that baiting in open areas is one of the most likely routes through which non-target wildlife is exposed to SGAR residues.

Ending the use of all SGARs in open

KEY DATES

- **4 July 2024:** The sale of products containing difenacoum and/or bromadiolone for use at 'outdoors (open areas)' sites ends.
- **31 December 2024:** Use period, and use in 'open areas' ends.
- **1 January 2025:** Using SGARs to treat rat infestations not associated with a building becomes illegal.

areas aims to reduce the threat posed by chemical rodent control to non-target species. The change was a unanimous decision by all CRRU directors to help meet rodenticide stewardship environmental targets.

NFU Senior Plant Health Adviser Dr Alison Warrington said: "Rat infestations pose a serious concern to many farming businesses, and being able to apply controls in an effective manner while

protecting the local wildlife is of great importance to our members.

"It is important that on-farm rodent control follows an integrated strategy, including both chemical baits and non-chemical methods such as trapping.

"When chemical controls are used, best practice must be followed for responsible and effective use, and to ensure that our industry continues to have access to these important tools in the future."

INTEGRATED STRATEGY

To help all users of professional rodenticides understand the upcoming changes and what that will mean for rodent control, the CRRU is looking to put together a Q&A fact sheet this autumn. A survey has been created where you can enter any questions you would like to see covered.

Submit your question before the end of October at thinkwildlife.org/survey/

+ For more details visit NFUonline.com/updates-and-information/upcoming-changes-to-rodent-control-what-you-need-to-know/