

Title Psocoptera (psocids) as pests of bulk grain storage in Australia: a cautionary tale to industry and researchers.

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Abstract

From an ecological point of view a bulk of grain is a huge potential source of food for a succession of organisms to exploit. These include pests as well as the human "owners". The success or otherwise of individual species depends on complex interactions between the commodity, environment, and interactions between species and control measures. The speed at which these interactions take place is most rapid in warm to hot climates like Australia, where pest populations can develop very rapidly. From time to time the status of pests can change. Before the early 1990s, psocids (*Liposcelis* species) were pests of no great significance to the Australian grain bulk-handling industry. Since that time, in some areas they have become the most frequently encountered storage pest. The paper summarizes efforts to understand the growth of psocid pests in the Australian grain bulk-handling industry. In particular, it demonstrates the need to understand pest behaviour and biology in addition to the more frequently examined toxicological and engineering aspects.