

ABSTRACT**Rodent Control in Restaurants in the
New Kingston Area****Henroy P. Scarlett**

Rodent infestation in New Kingston poses a serious threat to food safety and to the health of patrons who consume food prepared in restaurants there. This study sought to determine the level of rodent infestation in restaurants in New Kingston as well as the knowledge, attitudes and practices of managers and staff in relation to rodent control.

A sample of 27 restaurants was selected. Inspections were carried out at each restaurant and a questionnaire was administered to managers and staff members.

The results showed that 13.6% of the restaurants were infested with rats while 63.6% of the restaurants were not rodent proof. Refuse storage outside restaurants was generally unsatisfactory. Respondents from the local restaurants exhibited more in-depth knowledge about rodents than their counterparts in restaurants affiliated to overseas food chains. There was a significant association between the category of restaurant and the knowledge of respondents with respect to the difference between rats and mice. The attitude of respondents to rodent control was generally positive.

The study concluded that the proliferation of rodents in New Kingston could lead to food contamination in restaurants. There is need for education of staff, improved solid waste management and more effective rodent control measures in restaurants and other premises in New Kingston.