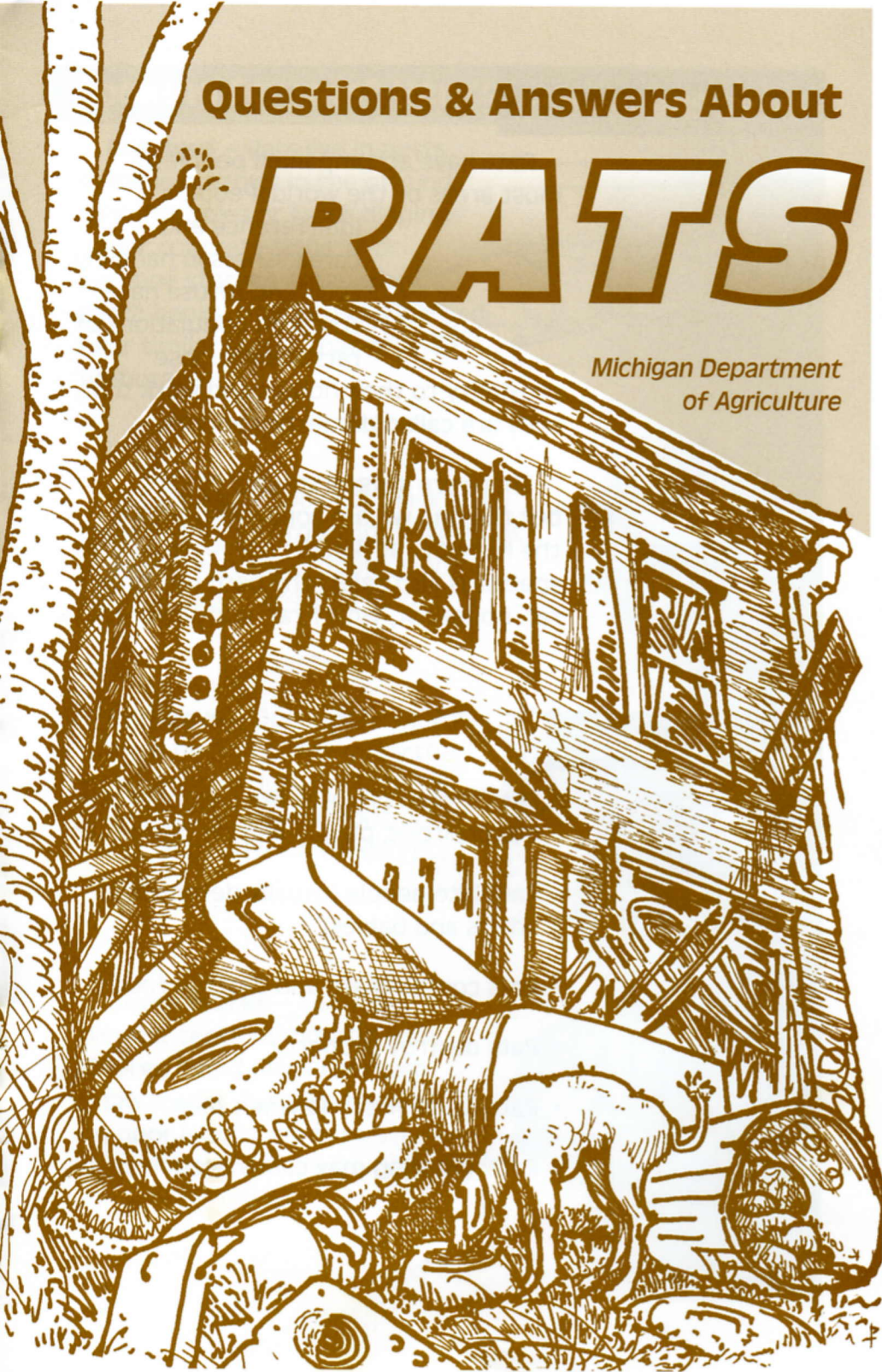


Questions & Answers About

RATS

Michigan Department
of Agriculture



Meet the enemy

Rats have accompanied people to most areas of the world. People's indifference and carelessness in handling food and refuse have fostered populations of rats in such close proximity to their homes and work that they are called domestic rodents.



There are several species of rats, but the one we are concerned with is the Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*). This species is also called the barn rat, brown rat, house rat, wharf rat, and sewer rat.

Rats are bad...



- Rats spread diseases like salmonellosis, leptospirosis, plague and rat bite fever.
- Rats bite people (usually defenseless adults and babies).
- Rats contaminate and destroy food.
- Rats destroy property.
- Rats cause hysteria when seen.
- Rats' gnawing may cause fires.

Looking for rats? Here's how...

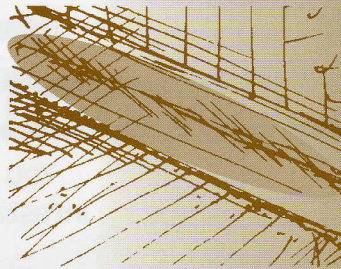
Burrows – Rats live in nests made in burrows in the ground. Look for holes or fresh diggings under concrete slabs, near garbage storage areas, along earth banks, near brush piles, and near similar places that provide harborage.



Droppings – Look for black shiny capsule shaped droppings with blunt ends, Norway rat droppings are approximately 3/4 inch long.



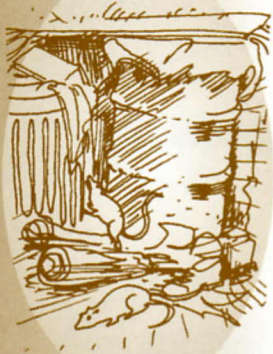
Runways – Outdoors-look for narrow beaten paths of earth free of debris. Indoors-look for greasy smear marks along walls, steps, and runways where rats travel.



Gnaw marks – Look for distinct teeth marks and light colored wood chips for fresh gnaw marks. Rats like to gnaw on door ledges, corners, stored materials, etc.



What attracts rats?



IMPROPER REFUSE STORAGE

- Garbage on the ground.
- Garbage stored in plastic bags.
- Garbage stored in damaged cans or cans with lids.
- Pet food left out overnight.
- Animal droppings.
- Bird feed on the ground.
- Brush/rubbish piles.
- Large rubbish items.
- Burning barrels.
- Tall weeds and grass.

How can rats be eliminated?

You can get rid of existing infestations by:



1. Starving them.
2. Cleaning the premises.
3. Killing them with poisons or traps.
4. Rat proofing the building.

