

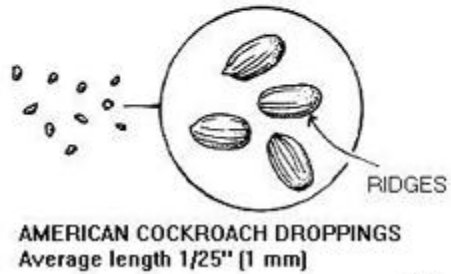
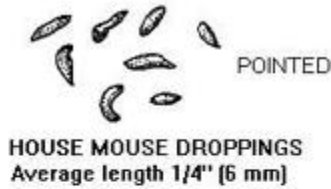


United States Department of Agriculture

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

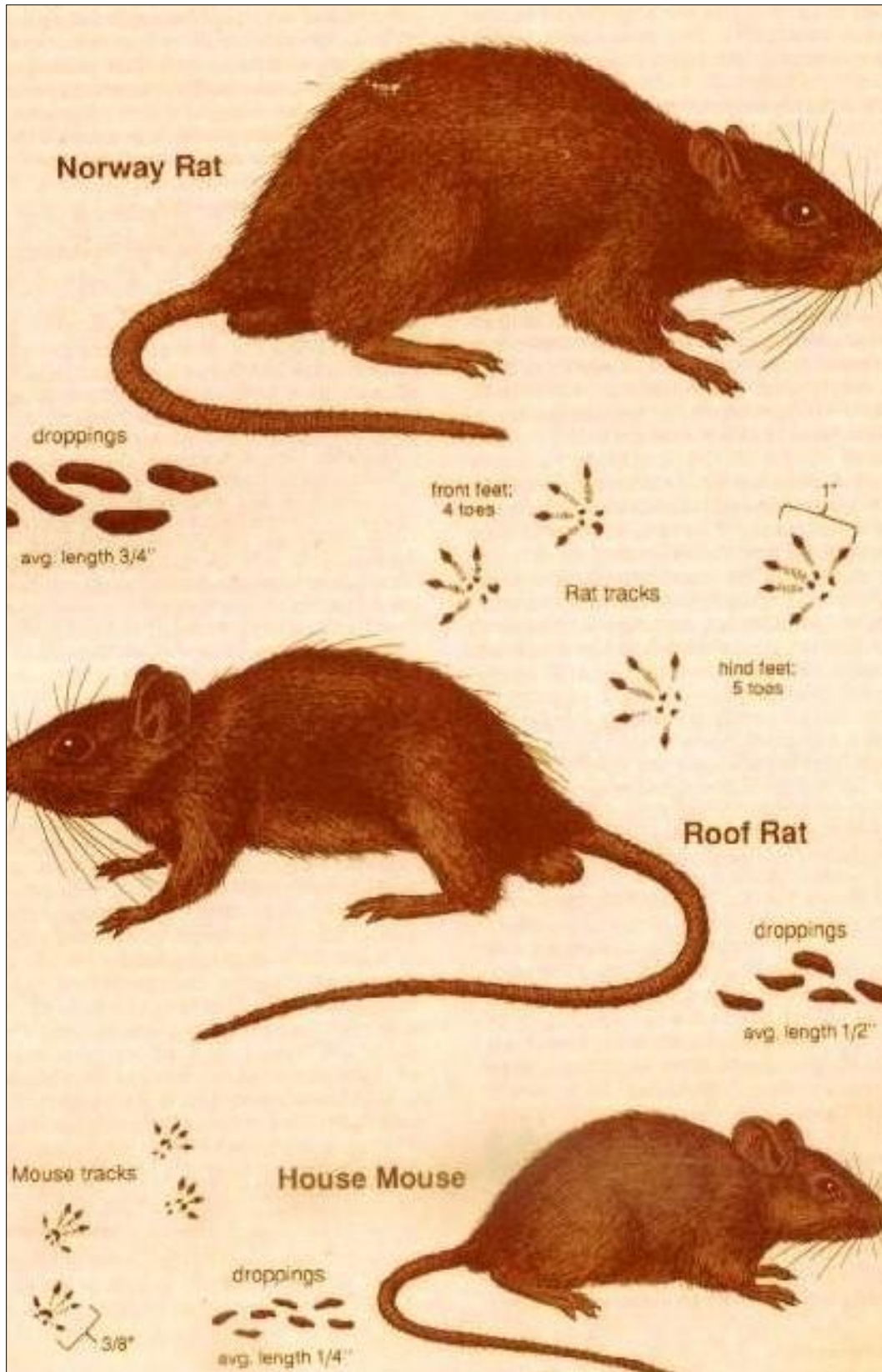
# Rodent & Insect Feces Identification

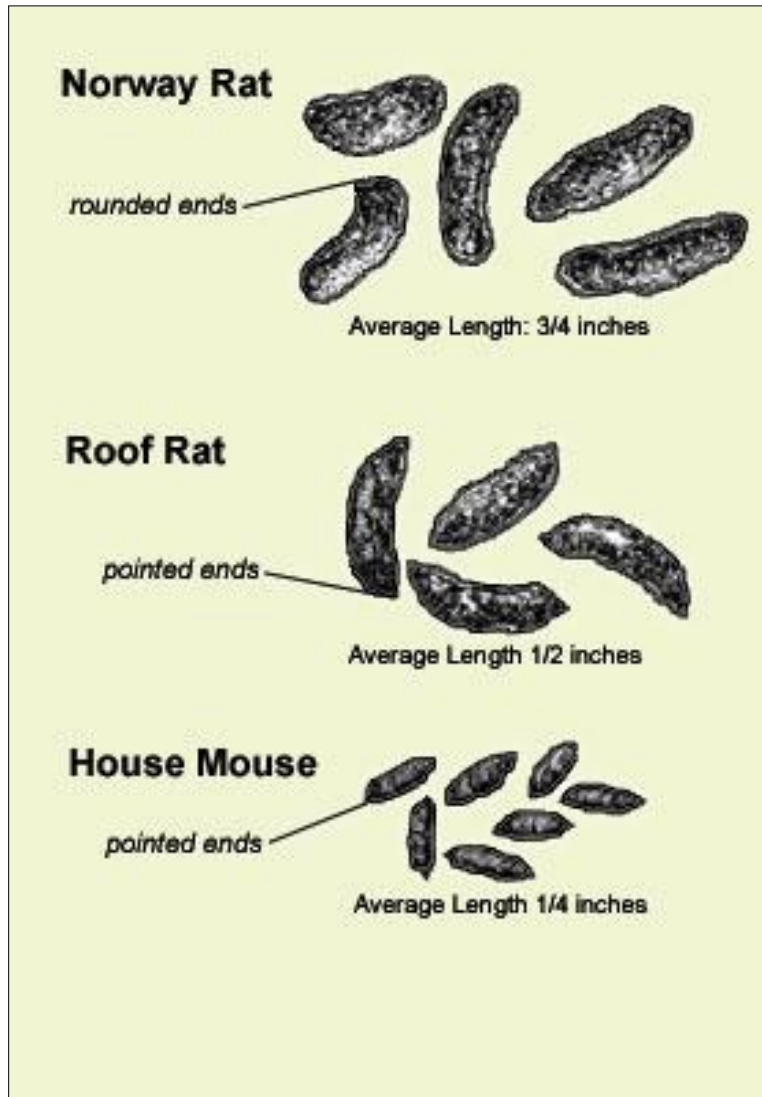
Aaron J. Lenz, Consumer Safety Inspector, Albany District, November 2011



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NORWAY RAT — <i>Rattus norvegicus</i>	ROOF RAT — <i>Rattus rattus</i>	HOUSE MOUSE — <i>Mus musculus</i>
<p>TAIL — Shorter than head &amp; body            BODY — Heavy, thick            EAR — Small            EYE — Small            NOSE — Blunt            (Also known as Warf, Sewer, Brown, Common)</p>	<p>TAIL — Longer than head &amp; body            BODY — Slender            EAR — Large            EYE — Large            NOSE — Pointed            (Also known as Black, Alex, Fruit, Ship)</p>	<p>FEET — Small            HEAD — Small</p>
DROPPINGS		
<p>Blunt Average Length 3/4"</p>	<p>Pointed Average Length 1/2"</p>	<p>Pointed Average Length 1/4"</p>





Fresh droppings are usually shiny and black in color, depending upon the animal's diet, and of a soft texture. As the feces ages, it dries and becomes brittle and lightens in color. If rodents are visiting bait stations, their droppings will assume the color of the bait which, as required by law for ready identification, is usually light green, blue, or red. Bait station use should be restricted to the exterior of food production and storage facilities.



An example of a rodenticide used in bait stations.





Roof rat (*Rattus rattus*) droppings



Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) droppings



Photographs of a rat cage shelf under fluorescent light (*left*) and ultraviolet light (*right*). The rats' urine marks, faintly visible under normal lighting conditions, glow under the black light. Rodent urine fluoresces blue-white to yellow-white when dry, bluer when fresh. As other species' biological fluids fluoresce when exposed to ultraviolet radiation, it should not be relied upon solely as an indication of the presence, past or present, of rodents.



American cockroach (*Periplaneta americana*) droppings



Fruit fly (*Drosophila* species) droppings stained with a pH indicator. The common house fly (*Musca domestica*) deposits very similar material referred to as “fly specks,” consisting of feces and regurgitated food. Fly feces is dark brown to black in color while lighter-colored material is regurgitated food.

Not to be confused with...



Fly pupae



Plant seeds

## REFERENCES

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