

# Maintenance managers keep their eyes on the birdie to eliminate birds

**B**Y KEEPING THEIR EYES ON THE BIRDIE, MANY plant maintenance officials are eliminating problems with bird infestation.

An innovative product called Terror-Eyes is terrorizing unwelcome birds and helping facilities make their bird problems disappear.

"Terror-Eyes is manufactured with holographic lenses set inside the eyes of a balloon that resembles an owl," says Richard Seid, president of Bird-X, Inc., the U.S. distributor of the product, which was developed in Japan. "Since the owl is naturally a predator to them, the birds are afraid of the balloons and stay away."

Approximately 6,500 to 7,500 of the devices are in operation at facilities throughout the United States and more than 1 million have been sold in Japan, according to Seid.

One U.S. plant successfully using Terror-Eyes is the Frito Lay manufacturing facility in Cucamonga, CA. "It has always been a battle for us to keep the birds away," says James Reeves, building maintenance supervisor.

"We're right next to a regional park, which makes the bird problem a lot tougher for us," Reeves continues. "Hundreds of crows, sparrows, starlings, and sea gulls would gather around our product-waste area where there was food laying around. Our hands were tied but we had to find a solution because of the tight inspection policies within the food-processing industry."

Bird droppings on pallets in the loading area are in violation of the Food and Drug Administration health codes. "If we're unloading trucks outside, we don't want the birds to even come close to hitting the containers," Reeves says.

"The bird problem is one which everyone in food processor experiences at one time or another if food or waste is exposed outside," Reeves adds. "We knew that our problem was getting out of hand."

After trying several alternatives without success, Frito-Lay found its solution with a local distributor of bird-repellant products. "We were trying to get an ultrasound device at the time," says Joe Becerra, plant sanitarian. "Our distributor suggested that we try the Terror-Eyes balloon."

Once he saw how Terror-Eyes worked, Becerra bought two of the units and placed them in the facility.

"I would say that Terror-Eyes has helped us to reduce bird activity by about 90%," Becerra says. "Because this was the most effective solution we've tried, I ordered nine more. Before we installed Terror-Eyes, hundreds of birds flocked here to fight over a popcorn kernel, now maybe only a few birds can be seen in the area because they seem afraid of the Terror-Eyes balloons."

"We'll definitely save lots of money as a result of using Terror-Eyes," Becerra continues. "Thanks to these inflatables, we can stay in compliance with our headquar-



*The Terror-Eyes balloon has been effective at eliminating bird problems at many facilities. The balloon resembles an owl and has holographic lenses set inside the eyes. Because the owl is a predator to the birds, the creatures stay clear of areas where the balloon is located.*

ters, county, state, and federal inspectors. If we were to be shut down for not being in compliance with health codes, the company would financially be in big trouble."

The Terror-Eyes units were developed after extensive research by the Japanese. Farmers in that country have long been troubled by birds like crows, sparrows, doves, and gray starlings eating vegetables. They used anti-bird nets but the birds tore them up and ate the crops. They also tried scarecrows, recorded explosions, and offensive smells. Nothing worked.

Eventually, Japanese researchers learned that the eye-like design on the skin of some butterflies, moths, insects, and frogs frightens birds feeding on crops.

The Japanese planning and design staffs succeeded in taking advantage of this effect by developing a new, movable eye-like design using their experience with lenticular sheeting and illusive motion printing.

The Agricultural Experiment Center of the Tokyo metropolitan government developed the product. The device that eventually evolved into Terror-Eyes was a heavy-duty balloon with an optical lens that looked like a hawk eye.

Soon, Terror-Eyes were being ordered by wineries in France, an agricultural research center in Britain, and a military base in Switzerland.

Now, American facility managers like those at Frito-Lay are discovering they can eliminate their bird problems by keeping their eyes on the birdie.

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