

The **flour mite**, *Acarus siro*,



A pest of stored grains is one of many species of grain and flour mites. An older name for the species is *Tyroglyphus farinae*.

The flour mite, which is pale greyish white in colour with pink legs, is the most common species of mite in foodstuffs. Flour mites contaminate grain and flour by allergens and they transfer pathogenic microorganisms. Foodstuffs acquire a sickly-sweet smell and an unpalatable taste. When fed infested feeds, animals show reduced feed intake, diarrhea, inflammation of the small intestine, and impaired growth.

A. siro is the dominant mite in postharvest habitats ranging from farm stores to household larders and at all points in the commercial chain between these two situations. Besides cereals, it has been recorded in meat, tea, spices, dried fruit, and pulses. Major damage to whole-cereal grains and other seeds is caused by the preferential attacks that mites make on the germ, which cause losses in germination viability