Rat control in Paddy

Recognize the problem
Rats pose a real problem and challenge to Indian agriculture. The outbreaks that occurred periodically in the past have brought limitless miseries in terms of food shortages and loss of livelihood among farmers. Rats inflict extensive damage to rice in all stages of growth. Yearly yield loss may range from 5% - 60%.

Background
Generally, rat damage is higher in the wet season than in the dry season. Rat damage occurs at all stages of rice growth but reaches its peak while grain is maturing. Increased damage is due to greater numbers of rats when there is increased cover (rice plants, weeds, etc.) and available food (rice). Field rats survive by eating frogs, snails, etc. during non-rice periods, making them difficult to manage.

Management
• Maintain narrow bunds (45 x 30 cm)
• Identify the bund holes and plaster them with heavy clay. Burn straw near the bund holes and cover with clay.
• Log the field with water at times of heavy rat incidence
• Trap using Thanjavur bow traps (100 traps/ha)
• Keep owl perches in different places in the paddy field
• Use bait traps for killing the rats like rodent paste, aluminium phosphide and rodent cakes along with paddy

When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > Bandicota bengalensis

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: India