

Tips given to cut corn harvest losses

NEWARK, Del. - The race to harvest this year's corn crop is about to begin. How well will you be competing in this race? Will you have small harvest losses or will you leave your profits in the field because of poor combine adjustment?

Expert corn harvesters leave less than two bushels per acre in the field. Poor machine operators have left as much as 50 bushels per

acre in the field - quite a difference. Only two kernels per square foot left in the field represent one bushel per acre, points out Delaware Extension agricultural engineer Thomas H. Williams.

The majority of corn lost to improperly adjusted combines occurs in the gathering and snapping areas of the corn head. Here are some tips for keeping these harvest losses low:

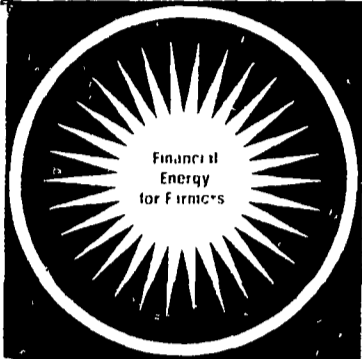
Drive on the row at a ground speed of about three miles per hour with the engine running at the proper governed speed, with gathering snouts floating on the ground and gathering chains just above the ground. If your ground speed is too fast, the corn stalks will be pushed forward and the stalks pulled out of the ground. At proper ground speed and stripper roll and plate settings, the ear should be snapped near the upper 1/2 of the snapping roll, with the stalks being pulled straight down.

Stripper plates may need to be adjusted for the ear size of different hybrids to avoid excessive shelling at the stalk rolls. If the stripper plates are too close together, stalks will be pulled out of

the ground and may clog the machine. If they are too far apart, the butt of the ear will be between the plates when it's snapped and shelling will occur. These plates should be set just far enough apart to pass the stalk through. Gathering chain flights should extend 1/4 inch beyond the edge of the stripper plates.

Corn head losses should not exceed two bushels per acre on a properly adjusted machine. Cylinder, separation and cleaning losses should be less than one bushel per acre.

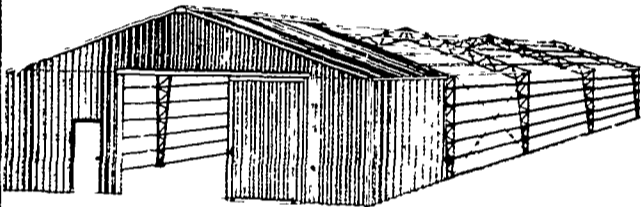
Contact your County Extension Office for a free copy of "A Guide for Measuring Corn Harvest Losses" to determine where your losses occur and how to correct them.



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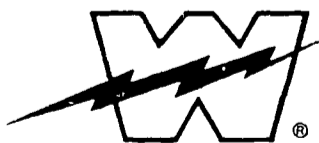
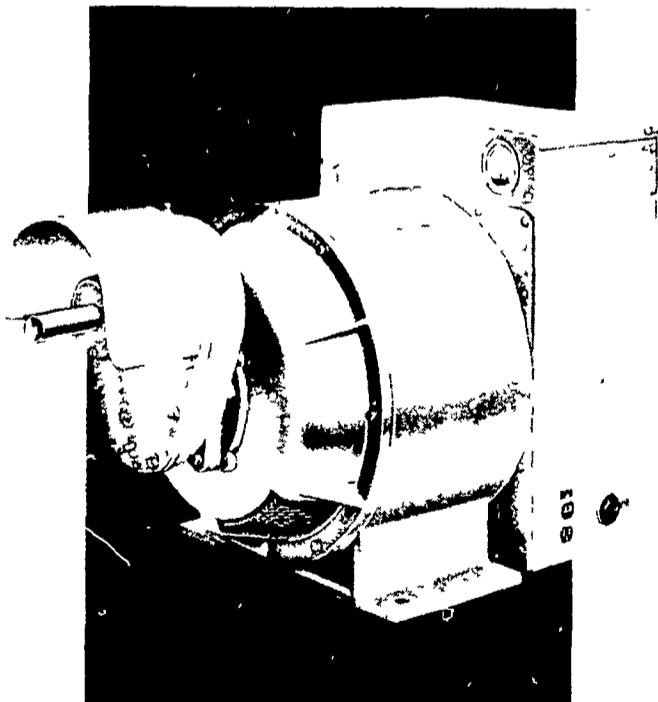
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