

# How to prevent aflatoxins in corn

COLLEGE PARK, Md. — The summer drought has set the stage for aflatoxin contamination in corn that could parallel the scare of

1977. Danger signals have been hoisted in some southern states, but early harvest reports so far have not indicated any con-

tamination in local cornfields.

This was the conclusion of the statewide aflatoxin task force, which met last week at the University of Maryland campus in College Park.

Organizations represented on the task force include the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc., the university's extension service and Agricultural Experiment Station, and the state Department of Agriculture. Task force chairman is Ralph J. Adkins, Extension agricultural programs specialist at the University of Maryland.

Adkins explained that aflatoxins result from fungi growing on feed grains, feed products and other food commodities. They can be harmful to poultry, some classes of farm animals, and

even to humans when ingested in sufficient amounts. Young animals are more susceptible than old ones.

Adkins noted the drought conditions that have reduced corn yields in many areas of the state may also have reduced the growth of the aflatoxin-producing fungus.

He and other members of the task force point out, however, that prolonged rainy weather could spell an aflatoxin danger alert.

Since aflatoxins are primarily storage diseases, it is essential that corn be clean and dry when stored. Combines should be adjusted to remove as much trash and weed seed as possible. Care should be taken not to break or crack the corn kernels.

Moisture from damp grain, or condensation, is the key element in mold in-

festation. It can turn a quality product into a reservoir of aflatoxin contamination.

While normal storage procedures call for drying corn to 15 percent moisture, drying down to 13 percent will provide an extra margin of safety. At this level, the growth of mold is stopped, and no more aflatoxin will be produced.

John A. Doerr, assistant professor of poultry science at the University of Maryland, says that proper grain storage is largely a matter of common sense. Having expended the cost and effort to obtain clean, dry corn, farmers should continue that effort.

Doerr makes the following suggestions.

Make sure that storage bin covers fit properly, are in good repair, and have watertight seals.

Clean storage facilities before adding new-crop corn or feed.

Make sure that the storage container is dry before filling commences.

Provide adequate ventilation.

Minimize headspace over stored grain whenever possible. A half-full bin means a lot of dead air and condensation surfaces.

When using non-ventilated bins, move the corn or feed in and out of storage quickly.

Inspect bin contents frequently for signs of mold growth and spoilage. Obviously cottony fungus growth, musty odor, discolored kernels, or a dark, dusty coating indicate mold problems.

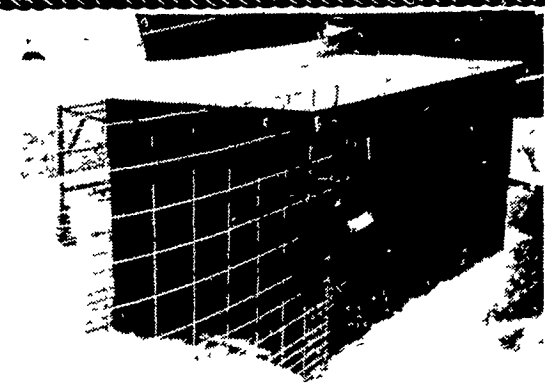
If you are concerned about a particular field, bin, or load of corn, your county extension agricultural agent can help you to get it tested.

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## Red meat output drops 13%

HARRISBURG — Commercial red meat production in Pennsylvania during August totaled 80.9 million pounds, down 13 percent from August 1979, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Cattle slaughter at 60,900 head was down 13 percent while calf slaughter at 22,600 head was seven percent less than last year.

Hog slaughter at 266,300 head decreased eight percent from a year ago.

The number of sheep and lambs slaughtered totaled 13,200, down eight percent

from August 1979.

Nationally, commercial red meat production during August totaled 3.02 billion pounds, a decrease of nine percent from August 1979. Beef production at 1.77 billion pounds was down eight percent while veal production at 31 million pounds declined nine percent.

Pork production totaled 1.19 billion pounds, down 12 percent from August 1979. Lamb and mutton production was unchanged from last year at 23 million pounds.

## Inter-State

(Continued from Page C20)  
elected president of the Paradise local and John A. Harsh was voted in as vice president.

Norman L. Hershey was elected secretary-treasurer and Christ K. Blank was named to the hauling committee.

Membership had increased and Gap was allowed four delegates and alternates rather than three.

Delegates include: Jay M. Hershey, Gordon Hoover, Donald B. Miller, and Christian K. Smucker. Alternates will be: Isaac S. Beiler, Emanuel S. Smucker, Melvin S. Stoltzfus, and Elam Reel.

The New Holland-Leola Local chose Harry Zimmerman, Jr. as president and David S. Fisher as vice president.

Secretary-treasurer will be Walter C. Martin and David S. Fisher will serve on the hauling committee.

The three delegates will be John R. Groff, Clarence M. Hoover, and Walter C. Martin. Alternates will be Thomas A. Denlinger, Jere K. Skiles, and Elam B. Stoltzfoos.

J. Richard Herr was

secretary-treasurer of the Paradise local and John A. Harsh was voted in as vice president.

Aaron Lapp, Jr. will serve as secretary-treasurer and Leroy K. King will be on the hauling committee.

Delegates for the year include Daniel L. Esh, J. Richard Herr, and Amos S. Smoker. Alternates will be Samuel L. Esh, John A. Harsh, and Alien B. Mellinger.

A 50 year membership award was presented to Mrs. and Mr. John R. Groff of the New Holland-Leola local.

A 25 year membership award was given to Hershey E. Kurtz of the Gap local.

Members were assured the Cooperative had taken action on the mailing problems with milk checks.

Members were told the Post Office has reviewed the problem and assured Inter-State the checks will be delivered on time.

The annual meeting of the Cooperative is scheduled for November 11 and 12 at the Host Farm in Lancaster. The banquet will be held the night of November 11.—CH

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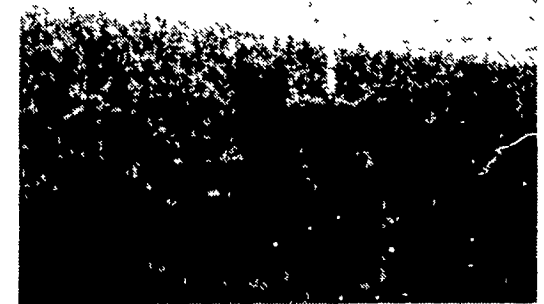


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