

For winning dairy rations . . .

# "Select the seed before the feed"

**D**etermining what hybrids to plant for corn silage and calculating dairy rations seems like two conflicting specialties. Lee Lutz has found that the two fit like a glove.

As a marketer of feed and seed, Lutz believes that applying corn-silage research conducted by Cargill Hybrid Seeds can help increase dairy herd profitability. The research clearly shows that some corn hybrids are more digestible and have better feeding qualities than others.

Hybrid recommendations for silage are not taken lightly in dairy-dominant Chenango County, New York, where Lutz and his father operate Smyrna Feed. Much of the corn acreage in the county is chopped for silage. The Cargill Hybrid Seeds *Forage Quality Program* emphasizes what Lutz has long believed—that the basis for dairy rations with high production capacity should start with a fine-tuned hybrid selection program.

"I know that when we supply feed to a dairy producer he expects herd production to meet his goals or he might look for another feed supplier," says Lutz. "That's why it's an advantage to recommend corn hybrids that I know will help assure top forage quality because improved digestibility is important for top milk production."

## Surprising Hybrid Differences

Cargill and university research show some surprising differences among corn hybrids that grabbed Lutz' attention. Conducted since 1987, the work shows large differences in both forage and grain yields and in silage-quality attributes for different hybrids. The resulting data base of corn silage traits identifies hybrid genetics with superior tonnage and enhanced feed value. This allows dairy and beef producers to select corn hybrids from a corn silage menu. This menu—divided by maturity groups—lists key forage quality traits for energy, protein, fiber and fiber digestibility, identifying which hybrids within a maturity are best suited for corn silage production.

Is the difference in silage quality attributes among hybrids wide enough to even worry about? No question, says Lutz. Cargill research shows average hybrid differences for the following traits: Neutral detergent fiber (NDF)-17%; crude protein-14%; fiber (NDF) digestibility-12%; and whole plant digestibility-6%.

"This information is another management tool that the dairy



producer of the 90s can use to become more efficient.," comments Lutz. "It allows me to make better recommendations to help dairymen improve their forage quality and their bottom line. Good forage



As a marketer of feed and seed, Lee Lutz believes a good feeding program for high-producing cows begins with planting highly digestible hybrids for corn silage.

quality means I can do a better job of formulating a feeding program since it addresses an important production variable."

## Menus Are Specific By Area

Check with your Cargill Hybrid Seeds dealer about a corn silage hybrid that will help you get the highest profit potential for your dairy or beef cattle. Or, call 1-800-657-4810.



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