

# DAIRY TIPS

BY  
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## Managing Forage Quality For Dairy Cows

Growing and harvesting high quality forages is both an art and a science, with a little bit of good luck thrown in.

Weather and soil type are dictated to us, but we can manage seed varieties, maturity at harvest, and silo/bunker conditions. How forages are fed to cows is also under our control. Some areas requiring attention are:

- \* Corn silage variety - some seed companies are continually evaluating digestibility of their varieties. this can help producers better select which variety of corn to plant to maximize animal performance. Ask for digestibility information when selecting seed.

- \* Stage of maturity at chopping - immature forages have higher digestibility than mature forages. corn silage will have highest digestibility

when cut BEFORE kernels get hard and dry (chop corn silage BEFORE formation of the black layer). It is better to have some seepage from the silo than to have corn kernels passing through the animal undigested.

- \* Bunker silo management - cover silage with plastic and weigh down tires to prevent air infiltration. Manage the face (surface) of the silage mass - if it is well packed, silage can be scrapped off the face, with minimal silage falling to the ground, piling up and spoiling.

- \* Inoculants - addition of lactic acid bacteria to silage can speed the rate of acid production during the initial stages of fermentation. Silage quality will subsequently be improved. Ask your Purina Dealer for information on Purina Mills MAXI-SIL SILAGE INNOCULANT

**Contact your Purina representative for further evaluation of your situation.**

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