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2. Harvest at proper maturity to obtain the highest quality feed.
3. Harvest at proper moisture to ensure good packing and proper fermentation.
4. Fill as fast as possible, and pack properly in bunk silos.
With a dry summer like we had in parts of the state, a judgement call needs to be made to establish a balance between proper moisture and proper maturity. Moisture at time of ensiling must take precedence over maturity, if we are going to have proper fermentation with corn silage.

Ensiling and Storage

1. Cover silo with plastic, attempting to eliminate as much oxygen as possible.
2. Recheck covers on regular basis and repair holes. Covers on tower silos become loose as silage settles. Weighting the edges or persistent tucking can help with this.
3. Consider using inoculants or preservatives as added insurance to feed quality.

Storage and feeding

1. Silage remains silage all year if the above procedures are a yearly practice and not just thought of at time of ensiling.
 2. In bunks, feed evenly from the face and use four to six inches per day. Always dig a wedge from the bottom first and then knock feed down from above it, until you're at the top. This will prevent cracks and air entry back through the feeding face.
 3. In tower silos, feed 5 to 6 inches, until you reach well-packed silage, and then feed 3 to 4 inches.
 4. Remove spoiled feed from feeding areas promptly, so good feed doesn't become contaminated.
- These are not new ideas, but will serve as reminders that feed quality is a year-round job.
Doing all of the above should lessen the chances of a toxin problem on your dairies.

I would encourage everyone to assess the feed management changes they have made in the last 20 years and then adapt new strategies that will help them deal with the problems that come along with their new management.
In today's modern dairies that use wet feeds in higher proportions than ever before, toxins will be a problem that will have to be met and dealt with.
The sealed silos will not eliminate this problem because a nice layer of mold forms on top every time we stop filling for a period. We don't see it, as it blends with other feed coming out.
Bunks that aren't covered certainly are a potential spot to find molds and toxins. With toxins being very water soluble, every time it rains toxins are moved down into our piles of feed.

Even silage bales are suspect to toxins. Often silage bales are made when the weather doesn't allow us to make the feed in any other way. This type of weather is also what allows molds and toxins to develop on standing crops.
Follow good feed making procedures. Test for toxins regularly in conditions and feeding styles that can promote toxin development. Look for telltale signs of toxins activity such as reduced dry matter intakes, cystic ovaries, increased SCC and clinical mastitis, abortions and decreasing cow health.
As always, contact your nutritionist and veterinarian to solve the problem. Lastly, my phone line is always available to you.

Dairyman To Dairyman

GEORGE CUDOC
PA DHIA
Consulting
Dairyman

ANSWER: Unfortunately, this question came in about the time most corn silage was finished.
For those of you with long season varieties, or the desire to refill, we can talk about some sound approaches to silo filling. This is also the same time of year to be ensiling that last bit of alfalfa or grass crop.

Filling

1. Clean out old feed and, if possible, disinfect surfaces.

QUESTION: Are there things we can do to prevent mycotoxins in this year's feed?

CONVENIENCE?

Deworming their way — open box...unscrew cap...connect shoulder straps...connect tube...estimate weight of cattle...calibrate dosing equipment...have fire extinguisher ready...put on gloves...round up cattle...do not kink tubes...check weather forecast...now the rodeo begins!...Disconnect hoses...reapply safety cap...wash equipment...check "O" rings...lube gun...remove gloves...wash off spilled dewormer and manure...wish for some spare time — **OR**



Deworm the Safe-Guard way — tear open the bag...dump into the feed...plan what to do with your spare time!

Safe-Guard™

(dewormer)

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