



UTILIZATION OF BT CORN FOR BEEF CATTLE

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Now that the use of Bt corn hybrids is increasing nationwide, many questions have been posed by beef producers regarding the performance of beef animals when fed diets consisting of Bt corn.

In response to some of these concerns, two trials were performed by the University of Nebraska in cooperation with Novartis Seeds. The researchers, J. D. Folmer, G. E. Erickson, C.T. Milton, T.J. Klopfs-

tein, and J.F. Beck, wanted to determine if any animal performance differences existed between two corn varieties, N7333 and N4242, and their Bt counterparts. They also wanted to determine whether a variety difference played a role in animal performance.

The first trial utilized fields of N7333 Bt and N7333 non-Bt postharvest corn residue to evaluate daily gain and grazing preference. Twenty-three acres of Bt and 21 acres of non-Bt corn fields were each divided into 3 pastures and stocked with 8 or 9 steers per pasture in order to provide equal stocking rates.

Over a 70-day grazing period, daily gains of the steers were similar (.62 pound per

day) between the Bt and non-Bt pastures. Grazing preference was evaluated by allowing 16 steers equal access to 7 acres of Bt or non-Bt corn residue. The steers showed no preference for either the Bt or non-Bt fields.

It should be pointed out that there was very little corn borer pressure in either the Bt or non-Bt fields. The published results of the trial did not provide information on stalk quality, but it could be surmised that quality was similar for both types of corn residue.

In the second trial, 128 steers (average weight 620 pounds) were fed either Bt or non-Bt corn silage from either N7333 or N4242 for 101 days. Dry matter intake averaged higher for steers fed Bt corn silage for both varieties. Daily gain was significantly higher for cattle fed N4242 Bt (3.3 pounds per day) compared to N4242 non-Bt (3.0 pounds per day), but was similar for N7333 Bt compared to N7333 non-Bt (2.9 pounds per day).

Feed efficiency was significantly higher for animals fed N7333 non-Bt compared to N7333 Bt, but similar for N4242 Bt vs. N4242 non-Bt. When comparing across the

two varieties, overall the steers gained 11 percent faster and 8 percent more efficiently on N4242 compared to N7333.

Based on the results of the trial performed at the University of Nebraska, it appears that the presence of the Bt trait in

corn hybrids does not have a consistent affect on performance of growing steers. The study does support the popular notion that hybrid genotype plays an important role in animal performance.

Record Ethanol Production Set; Record For Year Anticipated

Fred Stemme
Director Of Communications
Missouri Corn Growers Association

According to the Energy Information Administration and the Renewable Fuels Association (RFA), the domestic fuel ethanol industry produced an all-time record of 106,000 barrels per day in October 1999.

The previous record of 103,000 bushels per day was set the previous October. According to RFA, the production increase was a response to new market opportunities in reformulated gasoline markets

across the country, particularly in California, the start-up of new ethanol production facilities, and continued improvements in technology and production efficiencies.

"We are on the way to setting a new record for annual fuel ethanol production in 1999," said Eric Vaughn, RFA president. Production totals for 1999 through October exceed 1.22 billion gallons, and if production in November and December reflects previous years' production, the total for 1999 can be expected to exceed 1.5 billion gallons.

The two new Missouri ethanol plants, under construction by Missouri farmer-owned cooperatives, will add to this total by each producing approximately 15 million gallons of ethanol annually.

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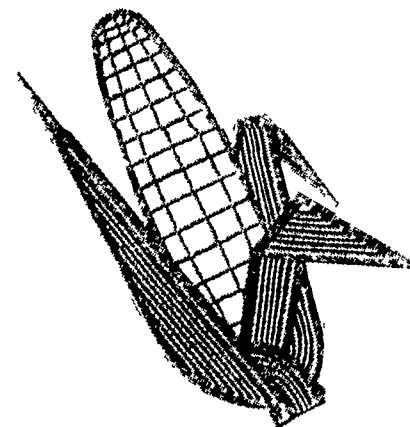
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