

Watch Out For Mold, Mycotoxin Problems In Feed

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This year's growing conditions in Pennsylvania are setting us up for the right conditions to find increased mold and mycotoxins in home grown feeds this year.

Cool wet growing seasons that delay the harvest of crops, especially corn, will set up the right conditions for mold and mycotoxin formation on crops while in the field. Fusarium toxins occur more often with cool wet growing conditions, while hot humid conditions favor the formation of aflatoxins in feeds and forages.

Molds in general will increase as we wait for forage crops such as corn to dry down as a result of wet field conditions.

Molds will not always contain dangerous compounds, however they most often result in reduced feed intake and reduced digestibility of feeds and forages, which result in reduced production. The problems can be minimized if we reduce the amount of total molds that are fed in a single ration.

While we cannot change the weather, be aware of the strong potential for problems, look for molds

and mold spores, do some testing if you suspect problems, and consider ration changes where possible. You may consider using mold inhibitors and mycotoxin binding compounds for your feeds.

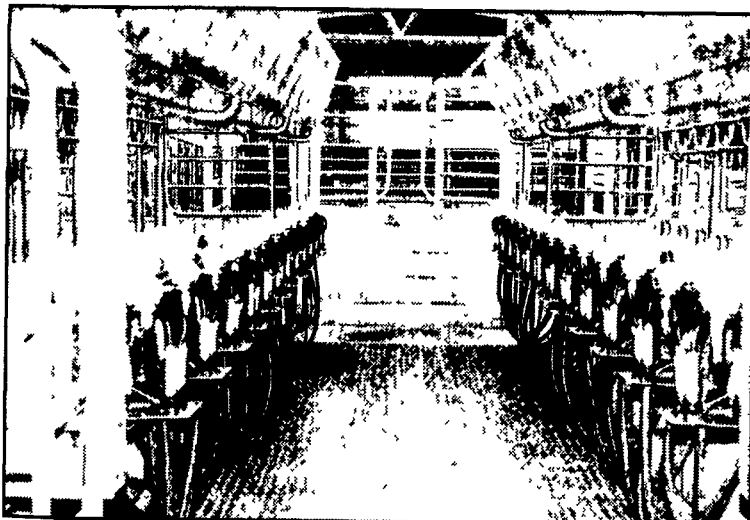
Also watch for feed bunk heating with this year's forages. High levels of mold spores may result in TMRs that heat fast even in cold weather. This may require a mold inhibitor or change in feeding management to overcome this problem.



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