

Prairie News

Is Snaplage Right for You?

As forage inventories begin to accumulate and corn yields become more predictable, its time to start thinking about how you're going to harvest corn this fall. Due to its convenient harvest window, between corn silage and high moisture corn, snaplage is getting a renewed interest from dairymen and custom harvesters alike.

Snaplage is corn harvested with a silage chopper equipped with a snapper head and a kernel processor. It contains the kernels, cob, husk, and ear shank. When harvested properly, it can be a great source of rapidly degradable starch and digestible fiber.

Like any ensiled feed, harvesting at the right moisture content is the key to quality. As the corn plant dries down the cob rapidly loses digestibility, followed by a decline in starch digestibility of the corn kernel. For this reason snaplage should be harvested shortly after kernels reach the black layer, or about 35% moisture in most varieties. This will ensure maximum starch yield and digestibility.

Since the percentage of husk and ear shank is difficult to predict, its important to focus on kernel moisture content. Because the cob will contain more moisture than the kernels, snaplage will

end up wetter than the kernel moisture. In order to hit the target moisture of 36-42% in snaplage, harvest when kernel moisture is 28-35%.

Also consider using an *L. Buchneri* inoculant to ensure a longer bunk life and reduced spoilage.



Monitoring kernel moisture is essential when harvesting snaplage.

When is snaplage a good idea?

- 1) When you own silage chopping equipment with a kernel processor adding a snapper head will maximize the use of equipment you are already paying for.
- 2) When you consistently add soyhulls, beet pulp, or citrus pulp to your ration

consider using snaplage as your source of digestible fiber, reducing purchased feed costs.

- 3) If you are limited on acres snaplage can increase the lbs of dry matter harvested vs. HMSC.

When NOT to use snaplage?

1) When your corn crop has experienced drought stress or hail damage. These stressors leave the corn plant susceptible to mycotoxins which concentrate in the cob. Harvesting snaplage will result in higher mycotoxin concentration than corn silage or HMSC.

2) When corn harvest gets delayed and snaplage can't be put up at the proper moisture. Dry snaplage has very poor digestibility and is prone to mold and instability. If snaplage can't be harvested at the right moisture you will be further ahead to wait and harvest the corn as dry shelled corn. This will allow you to grind the corn enough to ensure high digestibility and eliminate spoilage.

This year, consider harvesting a portion of your corn crop as snaplage. In many cases it will be a more convenient and economical way of harvesting your corn crop.

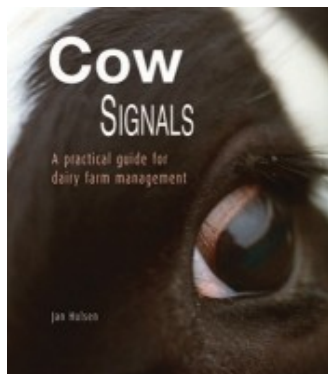
Keys to Silage

Success

- > Harvest at the optimal moisture content
- > Eliminate Oxygen ASAP
- > Take advantage of kernel processing
- > Monitor moisture content during feedout.

Inside this issue:

Snaplage	CV
Cow Signals	2
Why monitor DM?	2
Improving Aerobic Stability	2
Monitor Kernel Processing	3
Water: Crucial for Calves	3
Forget Ca:P	3
Burn Down Day '09	Back
Route Truck Calendar	Back



Cow Signals—A Practical Guide for Dairy Cow Management

Cows send out signals about their well being all the time. In day-to-day management of the cows it is important to pick up on these signals. Due to other business the antenna to pick up signals may have become shorter or rusty.

Hoard's Dairyman is distributing a book called 'Cow Signals'. This

book is written by Jan Hulson (www.vetvice.com), a veterinarian and cow lover. This practical guide might help you to improve observations on cows and try to answer the questions: Why cows have a certain behavior? What is the cause? What does it mean?

Cow Signals can be ordered via the website of Hoards Dairyman

(<https://www.hoards.com/webstore.asp>) for \$24.95 and is available in English and Spanish.



A Koster Tester is a relatively cheap way to ensure that your cows are getting the ration that was formulated

Why Monitor Dry Matter Content in Forages?

Rations for dairy cattle are usually formulated on a DM basis even though we realize that cows are fed "as is". Therefore, if the DM content of the forages changes the relative makeup of the diet has changed from what your nutritionist formulated.

Consider a diet formulated to contain 10 lb of DM from haylage that was 30% DM. That means that 33.2 lb of wet haylage is being fed each day. However, if the DM content of that haylage

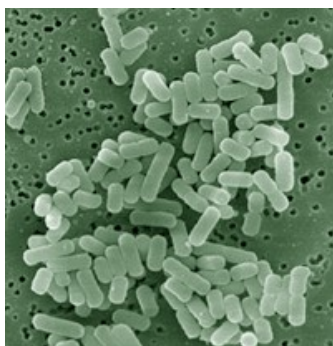
changes to 35%, you are now offering 11.7 lb of DM.

If haylage is valued at \$45/ton you have wasted \$0.13 by supplying more haylage than your nutritionist recommended. Plus, you probably diluted the concentrate a little and will reduce milk yield.

Conversely, if the DM content of your haylage dropped to 25% you have shorted your cows by the nutrients in 1.7 lb of haylage.

Ask your nutritionist to provide you with moisture variation reports for each ration. This way you can keep rations balanced through moisture changes.

Equipment to measure forage DM can be purchased from many farm supplies for approximately \$350. Alternatively, many university web sites provide directions for measuring forage DM using a microwave.



***L. Buchneri* is a live bacteria that enhances the aerobic stability of silages.**

Improving Aerobic Stability—*L. Buchneri*

How stable were your forages this summer? Were they heating on the face of the silo, in the TMR, or in the refusals that were fed to the heifers?

Silage heats because as it is exposed to oxygen yeasts begin to grow. When yeasts grow they consume carbohydrates

and lactic acid, producing heat as a byproduct of their metabolism.

L. Buchneri inoculants inhibit the growth of yeasts by converting Lactic Acid to Acetic which inhibits the growth of specific yeasts.

Because Corn Silage,

HMSC, and Snaplage are naturally high in yeast, they benefit the most from *L. Buchneri* inoculants.

Want more information? Log onto qualitysilage.com for more information about *L. Buchneri* and other silage tips.

Quickly Monitor Kernel Processing

Kernel processing corn silage can have a dramatic effect on milk production. At harvest time, corn kernels are relatively hard and difficult for rumen bacteria to digest. This not only reduces the amount of energy the cow receives but also the amount of protein produced by the rumen. By paying close attention to kernel processing at harvest time we can maximize the value

of corn silage and feed efficiency.

To check kernel processing place 2-3 handfuls of silage into a bucket of water and stir the contents. Then slowly pour off the water and forage fraction, leaving the kernels for easy evaluation.

For corn silage that will be fed

within 90 days of harvest, target particles less than 1/4 the size of the kernels. On most kernel processors this means a gap setting of 1 mm.

If you plan to store silage for more than 90 days before feeding, and harvest at greater than 65% moisture, half size particles may be adequate.

“Target particles less than 1/4 the size of whole kernels”

Water: Crucial for Rumen Development

While it's easy to understand that cows need water to produce milk, it's also a crucial component of growing calves.

Many studies have shown that calves given free-choice water will benefit from increased starter intake and increased weight gain, but why?

To maximize rumen development, calves need a combination of grains and moisture to create an environment where rumen bacteria can flourish. However, in pre-weaned calves milk proteins

tell the esophagus to divert milk intake directly to the abomasum, bypassing the rumen. Without water, rumen development is slowed, and calf performance suffers.

In 1984, researcher A.F. Kertz showed that calves that were not supplemented with water from birth to 4 weeks consumed 31% less starter and grew 38% less than calves with free-choice water.

Another study showed that feeding fresh water daily vs. weekly

resulted in 4.7% greater growth, 40% fewer treatments from birth to weaning (60 days). These calves also had higher growth rates than their peers post weaning.

To maximize calf performance:

- Start feeding water at 3-4 days of age
- Provide fresh water after each milk feeding
- Rinse pails between milk and water feedings.



Free choice access to water enhances rumen development.

Forget About Ca:P

Many of us have heard about the importance of the Ca:P ratio in lactating rations. It's been known for a long time that the Calcium to Phosphorus ratio in skeletal structure is about 2:1, so it would make sense to feed them in that ratio. Right?

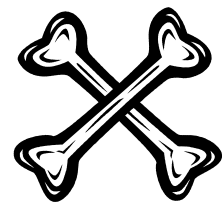
Actually, recent research from the Virginia Tech, published in the *Journal of Dairy Science*,

proves that Calcium and Phosphorus are absorbed independently of each other. As long as the ration meets the minimum requirement for each mineral the ratio isn't that important.

So what's the big deal? Most excess phosphorus is excreted through the manure and can be potentially damaging to the environment. Plus, feeding high lev-

els of phosphorus can get expensive.

If you're feeding high haylage diets, they're likely to be high in calcium. Don't add phosphorus just to get the ratio in line. As long as the minimum phosphorus requirement is met, ratios from 1:1 to 7:1 have been fed with no negative effects



Recent research from Virginia Tech proves that Calcium and Phosphorus are absorbed independently

66565 629th Avenue
Menomonie, WI 54751

Phone: 1-800-535-4485
Fax: 1-715-235-4921



«Title»«First Name»«Last Name»
«Company Name»
«Address Line 1»
«City»«State»«ZIP Code»

Burn Down Day September 3rd

Thursday, September 3rd will be this year's Burn Down Day at Prairie Ag Supply. Stop by our manufacturing facility with your whole plant corn silage samples for:

- Free Lunch—Burgers, Brats, and Sweet Corn
- N.I.R. analysis by Dairyland Labs
- Kernel maturity evaluation
- Camaraderie with fellow farmers as well as Prairie Ag Supply's owners and employees.

Call 1-800-535-4485 for directions!

September 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 B	2 C	3 D	4	5
6	7	8 E	9 F	10 G	11	12
13	14 A	15 B	16 C	17 D	18	19
20	21	22 E	23 F	24 G	25	26
27	28 A	29 B	30 C			

November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 E	4 F	5 G	6	7
8	9 A	10 B	11 C	12 D	13	14
15	16	17 E	18 F	19 G	20	21
22	23 A	24 B	25 C	26 D	27	28
29	30					

October 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 D	2	3
4	5	6 E	7 F	8 G	9	10
11	12 A	13 B	14 C	15 D	16	17
18	19	20 E	21 F	22 G	23	24
25	26 A	27 B	28 C	29 D	30	31

Route A: Exeland, Bruce, Ladysmith

Route B: Stanley, Cadott, Cornell, Gilman

Route C: Durand, Mondovi, Pepin, Alma

Route D: Spring Valley, Ellsworth, Baldwin

Route E: Chippewa Falls, Elk Mound

Route F: Menomonie, Colfax, Bloomer

Route G: Eleva, Foster, Osseo