



December 18, 2009

WET GRAIN DEMANDS ATTENTION

When you have a harvest where it was a bear for our grain to dry down, maybe Holiday guests this year will need to have a little compassion if that fan is still running. Those seeds are not dead but very much alive packed with energy. I am writing a third column on grain handling this fall for a reason, I am concerned about the condition of some of our corn in storage in the area.

With wet corn above 16% in your bin, please review the following winter storage tips:

- Use a grain thermometer to monitor temperature. (This is a sturdy thermometer attached to a metal rod that can be pushed several feet into the grain mass). Probe several places near the bin walls and a couple of places near the center of the bin. Allow several minutes for the thermometer to equalize with the temperature of the grain before taking each reading.
- Run the aeration fan if the thermometer detects heating anywhere in the grain mass or if there is more than a 5-8 degree difference in grain temperature between any two spots in the bin.
- At the very least, start the aeration fan and immediately climb up and lean into the access hatch at the top of the ladder. If you detect a moldy smell or the air hitting your face is warmer than expected, or you see condensation on the underside of the bin roof on a cold day, this could signal a hot spot is forming in the corn. If you find any of these symptoms, continue aerating until conditions improve.
- If you have a stirring system in the bin, run a couple of rounds while aerating to break up wet spots and even out the moisture in the bin. If you don't have a stirring system and continue to see indications of a hot spot, unload enough grain to locate or break up the wet spot.
- If you can't get the corn to 15% moisture before discontinuing fan operation (which is the case for much of the grain this season), it is critical that you get the temperature down to 25-30 degrees F to arrest mold growth. Always push a cooling front completely through the bin before discontinuing aeration for longer than a few days. He suggests that an estimate of the hours of fan operation required to push a temperature front through a bin of corn is 15 divided by the airflow rate in cubic feet per minute per bushel (cfm/bu). If your drying fan can produce 1.0 cfm/bu, it will take about 15 hours, but if you have a storage bin with a small fan producing only 0.2 cfm/bu, it will take 75 hours. With extreme cold at night run during the day.

I hope you'll check out our management tips posted at the CropWatch website at <http://cropwatch.unl.edu>. Timely tips have been added. So check that wet grain this winter, either once a week, or at the least, once every two weeks, and for Pete's sake, be safe out there!

CROP PRODUCTION CLINIC AND PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE RENEWAL

The 2010 Crop Production Clinics information is posted at <http://cpc.unl.edu>. You may go online and pre-register for locations close to you. The Beatrice meeting at the Country Club is Tuesday, January 12th. The York meeting at the City Auditorium is Wednesday, January 13th. Commercial AND private applicators can now recertify at these meetings. Other local private applicator meetings will be held to renew your license. The first meeting in Saline County is on Friday, January 22nd, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, at the Dorchester United Methodist Church meeting room. Additional training dates are listed at <http://saline.unl.edu/2010privatepesticideapplicatortraining>.



Randy Pryor, Extension Educator
University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Saline County
306 West 3rd Street, Wilber, NE 68465
Phone (402) 821-2151 • Fax (402) 821-3398 • e-mail: randy.pryor@unl.edu