



PORK BRIEFS

THE LATEST INFORMATION ON SWINE NUTRITION



Feeding High Moisture Corn

By Ken Palen

Feeding High Moisture Shelled Corn (HMSC) or High Moisture Ground Corn (HMC) is a common practice. In Europe, HMC is ground and put in bunker silos once it has been treated with acid, usually propionic acid is used but some other combinations of products are used as well. Years ago we had producers treat wet shelled corn with propionic acid and put it into wood bins upstairs in the barn. One customer had a glass lined (harvester) silo which he put untreated wet shelled corn into, and a wood grainery upstairs in the barn where he put wet shelled corn treated with propionic acid at the proper rate depending on the moisture content. When we fed it out I could see no difference in palatability of the corn or the performance of the pigs, the producer always thought there was a small advantage to the treated HMSC in the wood bin.

Whether the HMC is ground into a silo, put into a glass lined silo whole or treated whole and put into a wood bin the key to it all is to get the pH level of the corn down to 4 to 4.2 pH so it will store well without rotting. Too low of pH (below 4) can have an affect on palatability of the corn; the pigs won't like the corn if we put too much acid on it or if it goes rotten.

The other issue with HMSC is to keep it good in the silos in the whole form. Keeping oxygen away from the corn is a must. If oxygen is allowed to penetrate the corn it will start working to un-stabilize the corn, resulting



in the production of yeasts and moulds. Both can reduce intakes, and may even reduce the immune system and even become toxic causing health problems in

cont.>>

Inside this Issue:

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the pigs. This is why it is always wise to do everything you can to pack the bunker silo correctly, using the right amount of propionic acid if put into wood bins, having a higher moisture content if ground into open top silos and having properly functioning sealed silos or graineries with good aeration especially when freeze drying corn. With most HMC both ground and/or whole producers may also use additives (other than wood bins with propionic acid added) to help manage the fermentation on corn and reduce the chance of oxygen pockets causing problems.

It is also very important to feed HMC right away after removing it from the silo and especially after grinding the whole HMSC. Both these procedures allow for oxygen to be added to the feed corn and unless you add an additive to prevent the production of yeasts and moulds you can expect to have all the potential negative impacts discussed earlier like reduced intake, lower immune system, toxic feed effects, poorer gains and poorer feed conversions. Quality feed pays all the time in the health and performances of the pigs. The little costs associated with storing the HMC or HMSC correctly into clean facilities, adding additives as needed and feeding fresh at least daily or better yet twice a day will help you be successful with feeding high moisture corn. Please be careful at harvest and enjoy the wonderful colours of fall in Ontario. Thank you.



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