

Silo Face Management

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Proper management of the silo face can help maximize performance and profitability. Silage that is exposed to oxygen prematurely can heat and mold. This feed has a lower nutritive value for cattle and can decrease feed intake and thus performance. Important concepts to remember are:

- 1) Silage should be removed from a bunker or pile by trimming the pile from the **top to the bottom** with the loader bucket. Lifting silage with a bucket starting at the bottom of the pile causes fractures in the silage allowing oxygen to enter. This leads to a premature heating of the silage in the silo itself.
- 2) The surface of piles should be kept clean with no extra feed loosely piled in front of the silo face.
- 3) Especially during the summer and early fall, 6 inches should be removed daily from the silo face of bunkers and bags. With upright silos, at least 4 inches should be removed daily. During the coldest parts of the year, these amounts can be decreased slightly to 3 to 4 inches removed daily.

Bottom Line: The silo face needs to be managed to reduce the amount of oxygen that can penetrate the silo face.

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