



## Field Notes for The Week Of

1-24-22

### Take Time to Clean Your Bins

January is about over and for me it can speed up a little! Winter is probably my least favorite time of year. Everything seems to be a little more challenging in the spring from feeding livestock, hauling grain to the market, driving to work, even getting dressed (if you're like me you have to put on a hundred layers). I often must encourage myself by saying we are halfway to spring, or it could be worse. I am consistently reminded by the great generations before me of the blizzards of the 1970s and the typical stories of waking up with frost on their noses! I seem to always snap out of the winter blues just in time for spring to arrive. This past week gave Southeast Ohio a nice blanket of snow with much of the county receiving anywhere from 3- 8 inches of snow. Snow is an essential component of winter, especially if you are a cereal grain farmer. Snow acts as an insulator keeping the plant cell walls from being damaged from extreme cold temperatures or ice damage. Winter hardy grass species can survive and even grow under deep snowpacks. Snow also provides nutrients, research from the University of Minnesota Extension finds that 1 inch of snow can have about 0.4-0.3 ppm of Nitrate nitrogen available for plant use. Wheat is not the only things that can survive winter, pest can survive as well, especially in your grain bin.

January and February are very popular months to haul stored grain to the market. Many producers are cleaning out their grain bins, selling grain preparing to buy inputs for this growing season. I just want the touch on the importance of taking time to truly clean the bin this spring. Many insects that like to feed on grain during storage can make their home in your bins, they can enter through different routes, but the main routes include flying in from the outside and contaminated grain. Grain bins provide everything you would want (if you are an insect), starches and sugars, moisture, shelter, and warmth. There are a lot of different insects that can create damage, but the key ones to be cautious are Rise weevil, Granary weevil, Maize weevil, Red toothed saw beetle, and Indian meal moth. The weevil species will bore holes in the grain and lay their eggs inside for the next generation. The red toothed saw beetle will also chew on broken grain and lay eggs in or on the grain. One thing is for certain if populations of these insects grow in your bin while grain is being stored, damage and poor-quality grain to sell at the market will result. This in turn can lead to dockage in price and if you feed grain, spoilage can result lowering animal performance or refusal to eat. Taking time to clean grain away from augers, entry doors, ladders on the inside and outside of the bin will go a long way in keeping your gain safe.

