

Weekly Article

11-9-2021

Considerations For Feeding Corn Stalks

Hello, my Name is Richard Purdin with OSU Extension, Ag and Natural Resource Educator and Community Development Educator for Adams County. I hope to better inform local producers and the public of the latest news in the world of agriculture. First, I would like to thank all the veterans and serving military members in the community. Less than 10% of the U.S. Population serves in the military or have served at one time. Less than 5% of veterans work in the field of agriculture. Second, I would like to thank the lord for all the beautiful weather he has provided farmers the last week. Dry days and low humidity have done wonders for allowing crops to dry down and get harvested. Yield reports from across the county have been fantastic with soybeans ranging from 58 bushels to 70 bushels per acre and corn yields topping out as high as 250 bushels/acre. With high yielding crops come high amounts of left-over residue, do you have a plan to manage the excess crop residue?

High yielding corn crops can produce large amounts of residue, this can be a blessing and a curse. Crop residue returns nutrients back to the soil, prevents erosion, and provides food for microorganisms in the soil. On the flip side Heavy crop residue can also increase disease, insects, slug pressure, prevent the soil from warming up and drying out in the spring. Some producers that raise livestock might consider grazing and/or baling corn residue to prevent problems in the spring and utilize the fodder as bedding or additional feed. Before you take the step of harvesting your crop residue for feed consider these factors first.

1. **How much residue do you have to harvest?** – For every bushel yield expect around 18lbs of stems and stalks, 16lbs of husk, 6lbs of cobs. If your corn yielded 200 bushels/ac = 3600lbs of stalks, 3,200lbs of husk, and 1,200lbs of cobs.
2. **How much nutrients are removed?**
3. **Can crop residue meet the livestock's needs?** - Corn residue is overall low in nutrients on a dry matter basis stalks and leaves provide about 4-7% crude protein with TDN levels of 40-45%. On the flip side there is usually about 8 bushels of grain/acre left on the ground after harvest, providing additional nutrition. Down corn could have higher amounts but is always a good idea to provide additional supplement and minerals while feeding corn residue.
4. **How long can I graze corn residue?** The highest quality of corn stalks is usually grazed within 60 days after harvest. Rotational grazing can extend

this process as long as 120 days after harvest (depending on weather conditions).

5. **Evaluate your free choice mineral-** Corn residue is very low in vitamin A. Make sure to take time and read your mineral tag and see if your livestock are receiving enough vitamin A. Vitamin A is necessary for bone formation and growth, proper hoof development, and adequate day and nighttime vision. Vitamin A is usually adequate in living green plant residue but leaches out of dried dead plant tissue. Growing steers and heifers need approximately 1000 IU/lb. of DM feed, 1300lb gestating brood cow = 1300IU/lb. of DM feed. Mature ewes and does = 1000IU/lb. DM feed. 1,100lb horse= 15,000-20,000IU/kg of DM feed a day.

Some other details to go over.

- November 20th – NAP Deadline for 2022, NAP provides financial assistance to non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of crop, or prevention of planting due to weather extremes. Call the local FSA office for details at (937)544-2033
- Annual OCA Replacement Female Sale- November 26, 2021, 6:00pm at the Muskingum Livestock Auction Co.
- Report Fall Seeded Crops (Wheat, Rye, Barley etc..) by December 15th, 2021
- USDA NRCS announces deadlines for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The Deadline to apply for these cost share programs is January 22nd, 2022, call (937)544-2033 ext. 3 for details.

From the field

- Soybean harvest is about 75-80% complete.
- Corn harvest about 60% complete, moisture levels are going down
- Vomitoxin issues might become a concern as corn stands in the field longer.
- Cover crops are still being planted.
- Manure application being made.
- Some producers have started feeding some supplemental hay.
- High demand for calves weighing 500-600lb calves preconditioned and ready to go on feed.
- Burley Stripping is in full swing.