

Improving Forage and Silage Quality on Dairy Farms

Issue (Who cares and why?)

Each year in the United States, more than 200 million tons of silage are preserved and fed to dairy cows. Although the practice of harvesting high-quality forage and preserving it as silage on dairy farms is often overlooked, research has shown that feeding high-quality forages increases milk production significantly and reduces the cost of more expensive grains in the dairy diet. As U.S. dairy farms become larger, silage quality is even more critical. Educating farmers on proven methods for increasing the quality of silage will give dairy operations that extra edge in a highly competitive business.

What has been done?

Through Extension programs based on UD silage research, dairy farmers in Delaware and surrounding states are being taught “best practices” to improve forage and silage quality. In the last three years, more than 125 presentations have been made in 20 states, and 8 countries.

Impact

Since learning that improved forage and silage quality enhances milk production, lowers feed costs, and reduces environmental waste (from spoiled silage, meeting participants, numbering 5,500 people and representing more than 1 million dairy cows, say that they plan to implement these practices on their farms.

Primary impact area(s)

Extension
Research

Funding sources

States (Cooperative Extension Services, Delaware and surrounding states)
Lallemand Animal Nutrition

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