

**MAKING
GOOD
SILAGE**

**Cooperative Extension Service
Oregon State College, Corvallis**

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These Are the

4 MOST IMPORTANT POINTS

in Making

GOOD SILAGE

1. Stage of growth. Cut early.
2. Cut fine for tight packing.
3. Control of moisture. About 65 to 70 per cent is best. Better too wet than too dry.

Control of moisture requires experience just as good hay making does. A simple way to check the silage as it falls in the silo is by squeezing a handful. If it makes a ball and leaves some moisture on the palm, it is about right. If it fluffs out again, it is too dry.

4. Proper preservation.

WILTING—Hard to do properly but may be used to control moisture. Excellent silage can be made by this method.

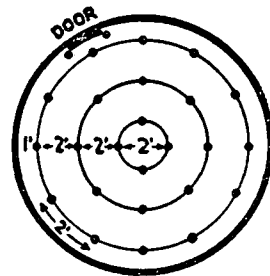
MOLASSES—Thirty to 80 pounds per ton will insure better quality silage. Amount of molasses should be more with increased legumes in the forage.

GRAIN—One-hundred-fifty to 250 pounds of ground barley, oats, wheat, or milo per ton of forage.

BEET PULP—Dried molasses beet pulp is an excellent preservative. Test at O.S.C. resulted in 50 per cent less juice loss with 110 pounds of pulp per ton of silage and saved (1) 2,340 pounds dry matter, (2) 231 pounds protein, (3) 247 pounds of minerals in 75 tons of forage.

***SULFUR DIOXIDE GAS**—Sulfur dioxide may be used as a preservative. Apply 5 pounds of sulfur dioxide per ton of green material. Use platform scale for tank to measure amount applied. Either 150-pound or 30-pound cylinders of sulfur dioxide, a hose, and an applicator are required for applying the gas. The 150-pound cylinder must be left at the bottom of the silo, while a 30-pound cylinder can be carried up in the silo.

Tightly tramp 5 feet of forage into the silo and treat this layer as shown in diagram for 12' silo. In a 14' silo 40 applications are needed.



Insert applicator tube into the silage as far as possible, turn on valve and draw applicator up in about 25 seconds until 10 inches below surface. It will take about 12 to 15 minutes to treat a silo 12 feet in diameter and approximately 28 pounds of sulfur dioxide will be needed for every 5 feet of packed silage.

In applying the sulfur dioxide make sure the cylinder is placed *bottom up* so that liquid sulfur dioxide (not gas) runs out of the tank and through the applicator. In finishing the top of the silo use 50 to 100 per cent more sulfur dioxide than in the bottom layer.

* Directions courtesy Department of Dairy Husbandry, Pennsylvania State College.

LEGUME-GRASS SILAGE

Why make silage?

Because you can:

- ▶ Save 5 to 20 per cent more dry matter per acre.
- ▶ Save 10 to 20 per cent more protein per acre.
- ▶ Produce 10 to 15 per cent more milk per acre.
- ▶ Substitute good silage for good pasture.
- ▶ Save extra early forage.

What to store silage in

Upright silo is best for average operator.

Metal, concrete stave, tile, or wood stave silos are all satisfactory.

Wood silos last 20 to 30 years or more and are the lowest in cost.

Pit or stack under certain conditions.

Crops to use

- ▶ Any crop that might be used for hay.
- ▶ Alfalfa, clover, oats and vetch, grasses.
- ▶ Excess early pasture.

Time of Harvest Very Important

Silage can be no better than the original crop at the time it is put up.

For greater palatability and feed value per acre, crops must be ensiled at right stage of growth.

You should cut:

- ▶ *Legumes* when clover and alfalfa are in the early bloom or 1/10 bloom.
- ▶ *Cereals* when in early milk stage.
- ▶ *Grasses* when heads begin to show (before blossom).