

Selling surplus grain takes time

After feeding and seeding you may have some grain left to sell off the property. If it was stored in a sealed silo and was fumigated last harvest then there will be few, if any insects to deal with. Before any grain is trucked off your property it must be fumigated correctly in a sealed silo and this takes time. (Refer MIG Newsletter Jan 08) Plan to allow at least 10 days for a fumigation to run its course before outloading. Fumigating in trucks is poor practice (kill some insects but egg and pupae survive to breed in your buyer's store – not happy buyer!) and it is illegal under the Health and Safety Act to move a vehicle on the road that is under fumigation.

Pickled grain

If the grain has been pickled with a fungicide it presents a problem of disposal if you are not going to retain it until next year. It is illegal to feed the grain out to stock because it will enter the meat of the animal and is also toxic. It must not be mixed with other grain because it presents a hazard to users of the grain and it must not be delivered where there is a chance it will be mixed with other grains and downgrade the entire stack.

The only safe method of disposal is to plant it out (scratch it in) and graze it off after germinating. Small quantities can be burned or buried.

If you are going to keep it until next year and you have had it treated with a fungicide containing an insecticide please be aware the insecticide will not give protection for that length of time. It usually last about three months, so you should hold surplus seed in a sealed silo so that you can fumigate if insects invade it.

It is also important to consider the hazard posed by any grain handling equipment that was used during the pickling process. Augers especially should be flushed out with water to remove fungicide residues or they can contaminate any other grain that passes through. Even small quantities can show up in residue tests with disastrous results if it was discovered in Japan.

Some farmers are now opting to use one auger for seeding and handling fungicide dyed grain and another auger for handling grain at harvest. This avoids embarrassment if you present a sample with a dyed grain at a receival point at harvest.

Flat-floored silos

If you have flat floor silos remember they are a **health hazard** if you climb in to shovel out the last of the grain. Dust is bad enough but if you have used phosphine placed loose in the grain remember the powder remaining from the tablets of phosphine still contain dangerous levels of phosphine locked in them. As you shovel you are breathing in this toxic dust. Wear a half face respirator with a new organic / inorganic cartridge attached to stop the grain dust and spent phosphine powder entering your lungs.

Even more important – don't admix the phosphine with the grain – it is now illegal. The phosphine label changed late last year and now containers of phosphine carry the new instructions.

As always at this time of year clean up and cut down on your weevils!

For further information contact Chris Newman, Department of Agriculture and Food,
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http://www.agric.wa.gov.au/content/fcp/cugrain_management08.htm