

An empty silo is not empty!

With seeding and feeding in full swing silos are being emptied and this is a good opportunity to finish off any remaining weevils. All silos retain enough dust and grain particles to keep an army of grain insects in board and lodging over the winter and ready to reinfest the freshly harvested grain.

OK so it's another job in a very busy time but think about it as one less task you need to do just before an even busier harvest!

Clean the silos as they are emptied and apply an insecticide such as Dryacide or Fenitrothion. Puff the Dryacide into a cleaned silo or spray Fenitrothion at 1% solution to runoff.

Some growers simply wash out or blow out the silos and then leave them unsealed - no food and cold weather kills weevils!

If you are planning to take advantage of rising grain prices with the remaining grain, make sure it's not infested with insects. It's a myth that insects appear in March - in fact they've been developing in the silo steadily over summer and start to be noticed in March! A monthly check of storage for grain insects is good practice.

To sell into a quality market the grain must be insect free and that can only be achieved in tested sealed silo. A sealed silo is only sealed if it can pass a pressure test. The pressure test of three minutes or longer will prove it can hold gas for the necessary 7 to 10 days.

To be sure you're getting a lethal phosphine concentration in sealed storage use a PHOSCARD^R. This is a copper strip that goes green/black in the presence of the right concentration of phosphine. CBH have supplies but any small piece of copper will do the job.

A poor fumigation with surviving insects not only risks losing a grain sale but more seriously is building resistance to phosphine. In the eastern States the development of resistance to high concentrations of phosphine is becoming more frequent on farms and serves as a warning to WA growers of the risk of frequent use of phosphine in unsealed silos.

Further information on grain insect control, PHOSCARD, sealed storage and pressure testing may also be obtained from the local office of DAFWA Biosecurity Officer or from the DAFWA website at <http://www.agric.wa.gov.au> click on crops / storage or type 'grain storage' in the search box.

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