

Is your investment safe?

While you are busy surfing the net for the next better forward contract have you checked your silos since you came back from holidays? The seed is your investment for a good crop and weevils could be compromising that important 100% germination.

Contrary to folklore the insects don't suddenly 'appear' about March but have been building up in numbers in the grain since harvest if you didn't fumigate after loading in a fully sealed silo.

One of the most common signs of weevil activity in your silo is condensation in the headspace as the nights become colder. The insects consume grain or grain particles and excrete moisture and this can reach the point where fungi and bacteria on the grain coat are activated and there is moulding and sprouting of the grain.

If you already have sprouted grain the only solution is to turn it into another sealable silo and then fumigate, leaving it to develop into even larger mould clumps will result in blockage problems at outloading

If you find weevils either visually or by using a screen how do you get rid of them?

Is the sealed silo still sealed?

Most farms have factory sealed silos, but are they still sealed? Silos will hold gas only if the rubber seals remain in good condition. It is a relatively simple and inexpensive task to replace rubbers and is essential before using a fumigant such as phosphine.

Fit new rubbers

The rubber to reseal silos is readily available from industrial rubber suppliers. (See Yellow Pages) Strip off the old rubber from lids and seal plates and glue new rubber in place with a rubber adhesive for an instant job. If using silicone leave the lids off for 24 hours to cure. Test the silo using a farm compressor and read the yellow label on the side of the silo for the correct pressure times.

Controlling insects in unsealed silos

In fact this is not possible but a short term solution to prevent further damage before seeding is to turn the grain into another silo. This breaks up the weevil colonies and reduces the chance of localized moisture developing and moulding the grain. It is better not to use phosphine (Phostoxin) in unsealed silos because the gas will be drawn out by the winds blowing on the silo (chimney effect). You will kill some insects but the survivors will most likely have a resistance to phosphine.

Applying the phosphine.

Apply the phosphine tablets (or Bagchain formulation) in the headspace of the silo. It is good practice to lay the tablets in a tray so that the tablet residue does not fall into the grain. Use a wide tray so that the tablets are spread out. The powder remains toxic and if

concentrated into a trough could affect the livestock consuming it or could be blown up into the face (and lungs) of the person outloading for seeding.

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