



Storm Damage

Overview

Heavy winds and rain late in the growing season can dramatically affect your corn crop. Flooding, bent or downed plants and disease are some of the potential challenges from extreme weather. Effective management is important for preserving yield and quality, including precautions for storing and feeding damaged corn.

What you should know

- Corn that is bent by wind will often recover, but flattened corn should be disked and plowed to eliminate residue and reduce volunteer corn.
- Lodged corn should be allowed to stand until it reaches 32-35% dry matter. Kinked corn will die and starch accumulation will stop, so it should be harvested for silage, since the grain will not mature. Fields that are matting should be harvested as quickly as possible to avoid severe losses.

Action steps

1. **Manage flooded corn on a field-by-field basis:** Floodwater height, length of time under water and speed of flow make each field different. If corn is standing well after flooding, let it remain in the field. Harvest for grain if water did not reach the ear. If ears are saturated, consider harvesting grain for ethanol due to the risk of mycotoxins.
2. **Aid fermentation:** Harvest dead or dying corn as soon as possible and treat with inoculants to aid fermentation and help inhibit yeasts and molds.
3. **Harvest carefully:** Chop slowly and keep cutting knives sharp. Cones and reels help pull in kinked corn. Chain-driven chopper heads pick up downed corn better than teeth or kempner cutters. Proper packing speed and density are critical regardless of silage stage at harvest. Removing oxygen from silage also is important to fermentation to inhibit growth of yeasts and molds.



Corn that is bent may recover, but kinked corn should be harvested for silage.



30-Second Summary

- Check crops for wind and flood damage after heavy storms and evaluate options to salvage yield and maintain quality.
- Segregate silage from damaged fields to maintain quality.
- Harvest carefully and consider using inoculants to aid fermentation.

NOTES:

For more information, contact:



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