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Silage Proven Hybrids from LG Seeds

Corey Prosser, CCA, Technical Team Agronomist – LG Seeds

Silage is a large part of many of our STAR Partners and customers crop acres. High quality silage products can help our customers produce the best possible feed for their animal operation and help increase revenue for their operation. Using one of LG Seeds many Silage Proven hybrids can help the grower achieve this goal.

Within the lineup of corn hybrids marketed by LG Seeds there are a number that are listed as Silage Proven. I have been asked many times by customers, dealers and LG Seeds Sales Account Managers (SAMs) "What exactly does Silage Proven mean?" This is not an easy answer, as it depends on many factors that go into the decision to list a product as Silage Proven and these factors vary across the country. This article will explain what goes into determining if a hybrid is Silage Proven.

Technical Team Agronomist Scott Serwe wrote an article earlier this year explaining many of the silage terms. It can be helpful to understand which each term means and why it is important. I will use many of those terms while talking about silage and Silage Proven hybrids and will add in a few more.

Let's start on the West Coast. I reached out to Joe Paper who is with LG Seeds in California to get his input on what is important to their growers. The item that Joe said the nutritionists use to evaluate the quality level of the silage product is called Total Tract Neutral Detergent Fiber Digestibility (TTNDFD). TTNDFD is a newer analysis that combines 24-, 30-, and 48-hour Neutral Detergent Fiber Digestibility (NDFD) along with an Undigested NDF (uNDF) measure, and ultimately provides four times the value of historic NDFD values. Fiber digestibility is more important than any other diet nutrient component and this calculation is effective to index those levels.

Higher TTNDFD values help to reduce overfeeding grain, or other expensive feeds, and can increase your herd milk yield. According to information from Rock River Laboratory, there are guidelines for TTNDFD for corn silage: The goal of the silage should be greater than 48%. The average of corn silage is 41.2%, and anything less than 35% is considered low. These values are can be found on LG Seeds silage harvest reports. Starch and harvest tonnage also play a key role in selecting a Silage Proven hybrid for our West Coast group. Make sure to reach out to your Sales Account Manager in California for help selecting the best hybrids to fit your silage needs as they may be different from the Midwest.

When we move to the Midwest and even into the East coast, importance changes. Each area of the country can be different, and every nutritionist places different values on varying aspects of silage. Some of the key factors that make a silage product valuable include; NDF, Starch, Milk Per Acre, Milk Per Ton, and Overall Tonnage. As I said, these values can change depending upon each farmer or nutritionist goals or guidelines for their program. The big difference comes when we talk quality versus total tons. Many dairy operations place quality as a top priority, which places a premium on choosing hybrids with higher Milk per Ton and higher Milk per Acre values. There are also operations who grow silage and only get paid on tonnage, so that is their only concern. Make sure to talk with a nutritionist to determine what aspects of your silage you should evaluate and place the most emphasis on.

Information from Penn State University indicates heavier reliance on 30-hour NDFD, as opposed to midwestern reliance on 48-hour NDFD results. Penn State is now including uNDF results in their state silage reports, recognizing the importance of time and rate of silage digestibility. Akin to the TTNDFD calculation which was referred to in the discussion of California silage parameters earlier.

With all this, what makes an LG Seeds Corn hybrid Silage Proven? There are many factors that go into the decision to list a hybrid as Silage Proven. LG Seeds performs silage tests across the country and evaluates current and new hybrids every year to help make this designation. A full lab report is run on every hybrid and that data is collected and compiled. This information is then compared across the lineup of all hybrids tested and multiple factors are studied. To be considered a Silage Proven product it must have consistent performance, good tonnage across all testing regions, NDF numbers must be satisfactory, with both Milk Per Ton and Milk Per Acre at consistently higher numbers. LG Seeds utilizes the Milk per Acre calculation as the primary driver in our decision to list a hybrid as Silage Proven. With that being said, other factors do come into play such as starch content, but that factor does not weigh as heavy, as that number can change year to year based on growing conditions and harvest moisture.

When it comes to selecting the best silage product for your operation, make sure to work with your team of Sales Account Managers or Technical Team Agronomist or STAR Partner to help you select the best possible product. Remember that the best performing silage products in one region may not be the best in other regions.

Thank you for your continued support of the LG Seeds brand and I wish everyone a great spring.

Sources

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