



Transforming Lives through Quality Education

DIVISION OF RESEARCH & EXTENSION

Making Nutritious Silage for your Dairy Cows

Silage will maintain your Cow's Milk Production

Silage making involves fermentation of grass and other carbohydrate feed sources under no air. Ordinary grasses, Napier grass, clovers, alfalfa, maize and sorghum are some ideal materials for silage making. Silage making is a preservation process of high nutritive value fodder. Silage maintains high quality for longer period and is valuable feed for high yielding animals. Making silage will smooth out seasonal fodder scarcity income from milk production.



Farmers making silage

What you require to make Quality Silage

There are precautions when making silage. The materials should not be too wet. For instance, sorghum or maize fodder should be soft but not milky when squeezed. Napier grass should be one meter high while legumes should have young pods which are wet. Molasses is added to it stimulate more acid production that fasten and make preservation better. Good quality silage will have attractive aroma, acidic taste and greenish brown or golden colour. Good silage is appealing and digestible when fed to dairy cows.

How to Prepare Quality Silage

1. Dig a pit and line the floors and walls with plastic polythene.
2. Now chop the fresh fodder to one inch lengths.
3. Spread this chopped fodder into the pit to about 15cm high.
4. Mix molasses with water at a ratio of 1:2 and pour equally over the spread chopped fodder as you compact to remove as much air as possible.
5. Continue adding chopped fodder, diluted molasses while compacting to remove air until the pit gets filled.
6. Then cover the top of the pit to prevent water from running into the silage.
7. Finally cover with soil to prevent damage of the polythene and leave.



Ready silage for feeding

Feeding Silage

Silage is ready for feeding in 30 to 40 days. To minimize air getting in, open the pit and remove silage enough for feeding each day then cover again. Cows can be fed silage as only meal depending on the body weight or feed half rate if they are also feeding on other fodder meals.

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