



It's recommended that the round bales be covered with two layers of plastic. Don't peek under the plastic until you're ready to feed the silage.

LOW-COST WAY TO PUT UP LIMITED AMOUNTS OF OATS OR ALFALFA SILAGE

Round Bale Silage

If you're looking for a low-cost way to put up limited amounts of silage, you may want to try making silage with your hay baler.

Here's the recipe: Start baling wilted alfalfa at about 50% moisture, wrap the bales about 3 tiers high, wrap the pile in plastic and you're in business!

Making baled silage isn't quite that simple, but almost — particularly if you already own or have access to a New Holland "beltless" baler and are willing to follow all of the necessary steps.

"We think round bale silage has exciting possibilities," Orley Friesen told FARM SHOW. He's chief agricultural engineer with the Manitoba Department of Agriculture and has supervised extensive on-farm trials with both alfalfa and oats round bale silage the past year. "Works great with the right equipment," he reports. "Cattle love it and will walk away from regular corn silage to get it."

Samples of round bale silage tested by the Manitoba Department of Agriculture show baled alfalfa silage put up at 45 to 50% moisture tests right at 66% TDN and 20% crude protein (dry matter basis). Oats silage put up at about 60% moisture has tested right at 12% crude protein.

Friesen told FARM SHOW that attempts to put up alfalfa or oats silage with belt-type round balers have generally been disappointing because of the problem of getting wet material in and through the baler. Best results have been obtained with New Holland's "beltless" chain and slat type round baler.

Making slightly smaller bales for silage (about 3½ to 4 ft. in dia.) makes them lighter and easier to handle, Friesen points out. Here are the essential steps he feels must be followed to make satisfactory round bale alfalfa silage:

1. Start with good quality material. No ensiling process can improve the quality of the original material.

2. Wilt the crop to about 50% moisture.

3. Be sure to have your equipment ready before starting. You'll need a tractor of 60 HP or more for the baler. We found 60 HP to be the absolute bare minimum.

4. Make the bales about 3½ ft. in diameter. Try picking up the first one with the loader before you make the second one.

5. If the crop gets dryer than 40% moisture, let it dry completely and make hay with it.

6. Haul the bales to the storage area immediately. A concrete pad is best but any firm, well drained, smooth, level ground surface will do. Pile the bales tightly together, 3 rows high, and in piles that can be fed within a month. Try to leave only the smallest possible air space between bales. Make sure the bales are placed squarely and solidly.

7. Cover the bales immediately after piling. This must be done on the same day as they were baled. Use a 6 mil black plastic cover. A 40 x 40 ft. sheet will cover 36 bales piled in 3 rows end to end with 5 bales in each bottom row, 4 in the next and 3 on top. Place a layer of sand around the bottom of the pile on top of the plastic to hold it firmly against the ground.

Place another protective plastic layer, preferably black, over the first one. This layer is used to protect the first one. Seal it with sand the same as the first one.

8. Place twine weighted with sand bags over the pile in both directions so that the wind can't work the plastic loose. Check the pile occasionally to make sure the plastic isn't getting loose or damaged in any way. Don't peek under it to see how things are going until you're ready to feed it.

9. When ready to feed (allow at least 3 weeks after baling) remove the top cover and store it for further use. Remove enough sand from the edges of the bottom sheet to allow you to remove a bale. Feed the bales in a good feeder so the cows don't tram-



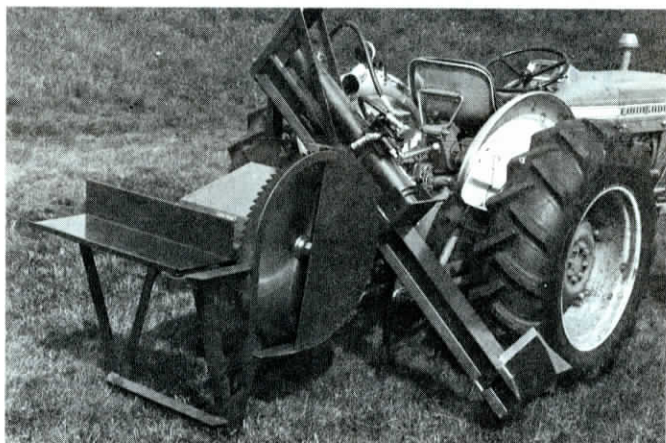
It takes a good-quality tractor loader to handle the bales which, at 50% moisture, weigh upwards of 2,000 lbs.

ple on them. You probably won't be able to save the 6 mil sheet for further use but it could be worth a try. It's better to leave a plastic cover over the bales till the pile is nearly fed, to prevent rain and snow from entering the pile and causing freezing or deterioration. If there is any surface mold on the bales, it can be easily removed with a shovel or fork.

If you do experiment with Round

Bale Silage, FARM SHOW would be interested to know how you make out. Thanks for keeping us posted and good luck!

Meanwhile, if you'd like to compare notes with Orley Friesen, his address is: Orley Friesen, Chief Agricultural Engineer, Technical Service Branch, 911 Norquay Building, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Can. RC3 OP8.



Saw runs off the tractor's pto and the wood splitter off the hydraulic system. Saws logs up to 12 in. in dia. and splits logs up to 26 in. long.

BOTH UNITS CAN OPERATE AT THE SAME TIME

Combination Saw and Log Splitter

New from Pockrandt Mfg., Tamaqua, Pa., is the first commercially-available cordwood saw and log splitter combination.

Both units fit category 1 or 11 3-pt. hitches and can be operated at the same time since the saw runs off the tractor's pto, and the wood splitter off the hydraulic system.

The V-belt driven saw comes with a 30 in. dia. saw blade which revolves at 1,200 rpm at a pto speed of 450 rpm. Its table (32 in. long and 12 in. wide) is adjustable and has removable rear legs. The saw can make cuts up to 12 in. deep.

The log splitter handles logs up to 26 in. long. The ram head is driven by a double acting cylinder which splits logs by driving them against an 8 in. hardened steel wedge.

The unit can be ordered in combination, or just the saw or splitter, direct from the factory. The saw sells for \$625, and the splitter for \$525.

To order, or for more details, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Richard Pockrandt Mfg., Box 182, Tamaqua, Pa. 18252 (ph. 717 386-4149).