

# Corn Stalks As Forage

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**L**ivestock producers have increased feed costs as grain crops and forage prices have increased. Our three regional livestock specialists, Shawn Deering located at Albany; Jim Humphrey, Savannah and Amie Schleicher, Rockport have been looking at how to

utilize ethanol by-products. One alternative they are suggesting is the use of corn stalks as a feed with ethanol by-products.

Growers are concerned about the amount of nutrients that are removed when corn stalks are baled or harvested from the field. Corn stalks on a per ton basis remove about six pounds of phosphate and about twenty four pounds of

potassium. This is in addition to crop removal from harvesting corn grain.

Soils buffer the changes in soil test levels so the removal is not readily observed from soil tests if taken yearly. However, if one would remove high yields of corn stalks over a long period of time, you would see nutrient levels measured by soil tests decline.

Using corn stalks as a resource is a good alternative if you keep at least some residues in place on highly erodible land or choose fields that are level. Next, rotate fields that you harvest stalks from. This will prevent quick draw-down of soil test nutrient levels.

For more information, contact Wayne Flanary, Regional Agronomist, University of Missouri Extension at 660-446-3724. Δ

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