Soybean Drying And Storage

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Poor fall weather has many soybean fields containing higher than normal grain moisture levels. The best harvest moisture is 13 to 15 percent moisture to reduce field loss and maximize weight.

When soybeans are binned too wet, spoilage is likely. The oil that is contained in soybeans makes them more susceptible to spoilage. For winter storage, soybeans should be stored at 13 percent moisture or less.

If you have to dry soybeans, be careful. Soybeans can be damaged by air that is too hot. High-temperature drying must be done carefully adjusting the temperature and time the soybeans are exposed to heat.

Low-temperature drying moves air through the grain mass. In wet falls, supplemental heat may be used. Heating air will lower the humidity; however, if one exposes soybeans to air drier than 40 percent humidity, soybeans will easily crack. To prevent this from happening, use an in-plenum humidistat to shut off the heater when the relative humidity is below 45 percent.

Run the fan to move the drying front through the grain. Drying time depends on air flow and weather but will generally take 3 to 6 weeks.

Check soybean bins every two days. Run the fan continuously until the drying front reaches the top. If you observe any foul odor, unload the bin and move the soybeans.

There are some soybean fields in which soybeans were still green. The greenness is the chlorophyll in the seed and this can be reduced by aerating the grain in storage for several weeks. This will reduce the potential dock.

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