



## Wisconsin Farmers Need to Be Aware When Buying Out-of-State Corn

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MADISON –Farmers buying whole-kernel corn from any of the six states with FDA aflatoxin blending waivers need to take precautions to avoid feeding livestock corn with dangerous levels of aflatoxin.

Deal with a reputable supplier, ask questions, and follow the precautionary warnings, says Nate Bartz, feed specialist for the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, especially if you are sourcing corn from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma.

Aflatoxin is a byproduct of some molds that can grow on corn. Aflatoxin-producing molds are associated with very hot, very dry growing seasons, and are usually found in the more humid southern and central regions of the nation. It is less of a risk in Wisconsin. However, the drought has reduced Wisconsin's corn crop as it has in other states, and farmers here who mix their own feed rations may be looking across state lines for supplies.

Normally corn containing aflatoxin above certain levels – measured in parts per billion -- cannot be used in animal feeds. However, because of this year's corn shortages, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has granted blending waivers to Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma. For a limited time, elevators in these states are allowed to blend corn that has high levels of aflatoxin with "clean" corn to produce a batch with acceptable levels.

The resulting blended corn is allowed for use in feeds for mature poultry, breeding swine, finishing swine over 100 pounds, breeding beef cattle and finishing beef cattle. It cannot be used in feed for dairy animals or young livestock, and it must carry a precautionary statement that lists acceptable uses, including species and age or size of animals that it may be fed to.

"If you're buying corn to mix your own rations, you need to know where it's coming from," Bartz says. "Not every load of corn from these five states will have been blended under a waiver, but if you're buying corn sourced from one of those states, you need to ask.

"If it was blended under an aflatoxin blending waiver, be aware that you cannot feed it to dairy animals or young swine and beef, and you will have to sign a written statement from the seller that you will not do so. If you plan to use it in rations for older beef, swine or poultry, follow all the directives in the precautionary statement accompanying the load."

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