

Feed Bin Management Best Practices



Check and clean feed bins regularly to keep feed flowing efficiently, preserve feed quality and prolong bin life.

Why Manage Feed Bins



1 Preserves feed quality and structure

Poor cleanliness can increase the risk of contaminants, insects, moisture, mold and toxins, and their resulting odors. It can also compromise a feed's structural integrity (pellet quality, uniformity of mix).

2 Helps prevent feed buildup

Ingredients or complete feed can build up on bin sides, which reduces flowability and storage capacity. Long-term feed buildup could cause a blockage that reduces feed mill efficiency or even an out-of-feed event, resulting in unplanned, non-productive days.

3 Improves efficiency and quality of feed

Well-maintained feed bins that are routinely cleaned out make it easier to get larger feed quantities delivered. Ordering feed in bulk is more cost-effective due to mixing and delivery efficiencies. Bigger feed loads also allow for proper mixing and better pellet quality.

4 Ensures proper application of medications

Maintaining cleanliness helps reduce cross-contamination after medicated feed uses.

5 Increases life of bin structure

Regular bin cleaning helps proactively detect structural defects so they can be fixed.

Best Practices Checklist



- ✓ Inspect bins for buildup at least once per month. Metallic bins should be inspected more frequently because they generally have more feed buildup.

Inspection should include:

- Visual assessment
- Material flow monitoring
- Checking empty bin weight if weigh cell equipped

- ✓ Rotate feed in bins so each bin stands empty for cleaning. Clean bins at least every quarter, or more frequently as needed.

- ✓ Remove all caked and moldy feed to prevent build-up.

- ✓ Repair bin leaks and make sure bin lids are properly sealed.

- ✓ Let the feed bin run empty before adding new feed. Do not put fresh feed on top of old feed. (Only applicable to tandem bins)

- ✓ Fill bin completely to reduce dust and caking issues. Partial loads require more feed delivery, which can cause dust accumulation and compromised feed quality.

- ✓ Do not keep more than two weeks of feed on-farm at one time to maintain feed freshness, especially for feed with a high inclusion rate of fat in the summer.

- ✓ Keep bin lid open if internal bin temperature is above ambient temperature after feed delivery in the summer. This will prevent caking/mold contamination that is caused by condensed water. Close lid afterwards.