

Storing hay



Lessons from a
hay grower



Horse
customers
want dust free
hay



Keep hay off the floor to prevent moisture from contacting the bale



Use chaff to build a layer

Even the tightest buildings seem to allow snow through



Dealers want bales
stacked cut side up



Lessons from a hay grower



- ❧ When baling don't allow bales to spend any time on the ground to draw moisture
- ❧ If you have hay that is not fully dry:
 - ❧ Do not put damp bales on the bottom; moisture works its way up and ruins more bales
 - ❧ Don't stack damp bales tight against the next bale
- ❧ Don't allow bales to set on a wagon over night
 - ❧ Will draw moisture
 - ❧ If not stacked will be misshapen by the next day

Lessons from a hay grower



☞ Pest problems:

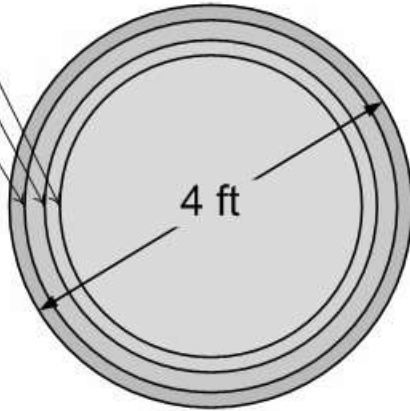
☞ Rodents

☞ Hay mites

☞ Know what your customer wants



6" deep: 44% loss
4" deep: 31% loss
2" deep: 16% loss



6" deep: 31% loss
4" deep: 21% loss
2" deep: 11% loss

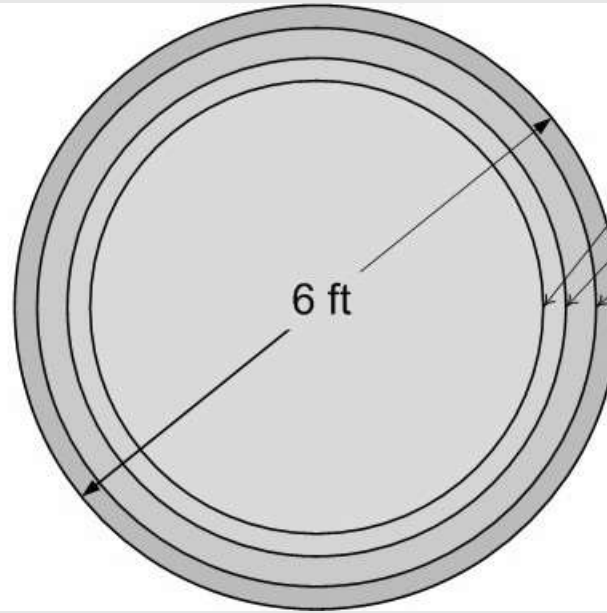


Table 2: Typical ranges in storage losses for various hay storage methods.

| | % of dry weight | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Storage methods | Twine | Net wrap |
| Pole barn | 2-5% | 2-5% |
| Hoop structure | 2-5% | 2-5% |
| Tarp | 5-10% | 5-8% |
| Stack pad, | | |
| covered stack | 5-10% | 5-8% |
| uncovered stack | 15-40% | 10-30% |
| Plastic wrap | 5-10% | N/A |
| Outside on ground, | | |
| well-drained | 20-40% | 15-40% |
| poor drainage/shaded | 30-60% | 30-45% |

Table 3: Value of hay lost



| | <i>Value of Hay (\$/dry ton)</i> | | | |
|--------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| % Loss | \$75 | \$100 | \$125 | \$150 |
| 10 | \$8 | \$10 | \$13 | \$15 |
| 20 | \$15 | \$20 | \$25 | \$30 |
| 30 | \$23 | \$30 | \$38 | \$45 |
| 40 | \$30 | \$40 | \$50 | \$60 |
| 50 | \$38 | \$50 | \$63 | \$75 |
| 60 | \$45 | \$60 | \$75 | \$90 |

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/storage.htm>

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/crops/uwforage/BaleStorage5-7-04.xls>

HAY STORAGE METHODS FOR KEEPING COSTS LOW

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“Hay storage is not cheap, regardless of the method used. However, I often remind folks that if you are storing hay outside on the ground, you likely are paying for a barn whether you want to or not.”