

# **BUNK SILO SAFETY**

## **Tips To Stay Safe In Your Bunk Silo**

**Cornell Cooperative Extension**

Southwest Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Program

A partnership between Cornell University and the CCE Associations in these five counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Steuben Counties.

### **Tractor and Truck Rollovers**

- ROPS (roll-over protective structures) should be installed on all tractors.
- Never fill a bunk higher than the wall height.
- Maintain a 1:3 slope on the sides and ends of a drive-over pile.
- Back up steep slopes to prevent roll-backs.
- Establish a driving procedure to prevent collisions when there is 1< pack tractor being used at one time.
- Sight rails and lights can be installed on the walls to indicate the location of the wall to the tractor operator.
- Only unload wagons or trucks when on a firm, flat surface.
- A tire rut, low tires on a side, uneven loading, and wind gusts increase the risk of machinery tipping.

### **Avalanche Risk**

- Never stand near the feedout face.
- Stand far away from the face. Take the height of the silage, multiple by 3, and remain that many feet from the face.
- Piles should not be filled higher than the equipment can reach (most unloaders can reach 12-14 feet).
- Don't pitch spoiled silage, this is a high fall and avalanche risk.
- Use proper unloading techniques, shave silage down the face.
- Never dig the bucket into the bottom of the silage.
- Never park near the feedout face.
- Wear a safety vest so you are visible in the bunk.

### **Entanglement/Run Over**

- Never repair machine while it is running.
- Adjust rearview mirrors on all equipment.
- Install backup alarms.
- Never allow people in or near a bunk silo during filling.

**Follow the “buddy rule”, you should never work alone in or near a bunker silo.**

**Check out Lallemand Silage Safety Handbook for more information!**



Figure 1: Two tractor operators working as a team, while packing on a safe 1 to 3 front slope in a drive-over pile.



Figure 2: An over-filled bunker silo of corn silage with the feedout face being undercut by the loader operator.

### **Falling Risk**

- Install guard rails on walls.
- Use caution when removing plastic, tires, tire sidewalls, gravel bags.
- Use equipment operating at ground level to remove spoilage from the surface.
- Never allow a person to ride in the bucket to take samples from a feedout face.



Figure 3: An employee standing dangerously close to the feedout face while removing surface-spoiled silage.