



Storing Wet Distillers Grains In Bags Or Bunkers

Storage of wet corn co-products such as wet distillers grains or gluten feed is a challenge for smaller cattle feeders and cow/calf producers because of usage rate. Many producers have attempted to either bag or pack these co-products in a bunker to reduce or eliminate spoilage.

Currently, the two most common sources of wet distillers grains contain 35% dry matter or 50% dry matter (modified wet distillers). The 35% wet distillers offers the biggest challenge to successful bagging or packing in a bunker.

Dr. Galen Erickson at the University of Nebraska has conducted extensive research into optimum inclusion rates of feedstuffs to mix with 35% dry matter distillers to allow for successful bagging or packing. Their recommendations are shown in the following table.

The researchers noted that modified wet distillers (45% to 50% dry matter) bagged well without mixing in other ingredients. They also suggested modestly reducing the bagging pressure when mixing the wet gluten feed with distillers.

What about packing in a bunker silo?

When packing 35% dry matter distillers in a bunker, the following was noted:

- Grass Hay – Mix 400 pounds of grass hay per ton.
- Wheat Straw/Corn Stover – Mix 250 pounds of wheat straw or corn stover per ton.

In both of the above cases the researchers were able to drive large equipment on both of these mixes to pack the material.

TABLE 1. Pounds Of Feedstuff To Mix With 35% Dry Matter Wet Distillers Grains For Bagging¹

Product	Resulting Pounds/Ton In Mix (as fed)	Resulting % DM Of Mixture	Resulting Height Of Bag	Width Of Bag
Grass Hay	120 lbs	38%	4 ft. 7 in.	13 ft. 9 in.
Alfalfa Hay	200 lbs	41.3%	4 ft. 5 in.	13 ft.
Wheat Straw Corn Stalks	100 lbs	37%	4 ft. 11 in.	13 ft. 8 in.
Wet Corn Gluten Feed	1100 lbs	40%	—	—
DDGS	550 lbs	49%	4 ft. 1 in.	13 ft 6 in.

¹Bagging pressure = 300 PSI.