



September 2007

The summer's heat and drought has caused numerous problems in corn. Poor yields, stalk rots and potential ear drop may not be the only cause for concern.

Several have reported seeing ear molds in corn. At Lamberton, as well as reports from Brown county (Jim Boersma) fungal colonies that appear to be *Aspergillus flavus* have been observed. *A. flavus* fungal colonies are a distinct olive in color and fluoresce under black light. This fungus can but does not always produce a toxin known as aflatoxin. This toxin has very deleterious effects when fed to livestock particularly dairy and young animals. Aflatoxin move into milk and can even survive ensiling and the ethanol production process.

*Fusarium* and *Penicillium* "like" fungal colonies can also be observed in drought stressed fields. The former can also produce toxin

The following links provide pictures and additional information on mycotoxins in corn:

- <http://www.extension.umn.edu/dairy/dairystar/10-28-06-Murphy.htm>
- <http://agbiopubs.sdstate.edu/articles/FS907.pdf>
- <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1800.pdf>
- <http://www.scamperschoicehorsefeed.com/molds.html>

NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab is one place that can run samples for aflatoxin. <http://www.vdl.ndsu.edu/inform/toxic/toxserv.htm#lox2> Click on the aflatoxin section for sample submission information. Their phone number is (701) 231-8309.

Some of you, like Bob and I, are old enough to remember the problems with *Aspergillus* in corn and aflatoxin concerns in milk during 1988.

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