

September 9, 2010

**A LITTLE BIT COUNTRY  
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**Sprouted Grain Has Good Feed Value**

The current weather pattern is a bit spooky. Rainfall during much of May resulted in delayed plantings and now harvest is well behind normal. Besides causing a discoloration of grain kernels, this wet weather can cause grain to sprout. We can only hope for the sun to shine soon.

Sprouted grain makes it unsuitable for use in milling, brewing and food. However, the grain has value as a livestock feed. Questions relating to the exact value of sprouted grains are difficult to answer because there is some energy lost during the germination process as heat, carbon dioxide and moisture. Limited feeding trials indicate there is little, if any, reduction in nutritive value of sprouted grains. Substantial sprouting will involve some reduction in energy value per kernel.

**Sprouted Grains For Cattle**

Value of sprouted grains for ruminants is similar to that of non-sprouted feed grains. Very little if any reduction in feeding value is noted in the sprouted grains. Data from Idaho, Washington, and Kansas, indicate that performance of cattle fed sprouted grains is similar to cattle fed normal grains.

Idaho researchers used non-sprouted wheat at 60% of the ration, along with 38% roughage and 2% salt and minerals. Test weight of the sprouted wheat used in this study was 55.9 pounds per bushel compared with 60.4 pounds for the non-sprouted wheat. Nutrient levels in the sprouted wheat were higher compared to non-sprouted wheat, due to the concentration effect that occurs when energy is expended during the germination

process. No significant differences in cattle performance were detected when sprouted wheat was included in these diets.

Data collected at Washington State University indicates that sprouted wheat compared favorable to a control barley-based finishing ration. Sound wheat (no sprouting), low-sprout wheat (9% sprouted kernels) and high-sprout wheat (58% sprouted kernels) were compared at either 25 or 50% of the diet. No difference in ADG feed to gain, or carcass characteristics were detected.

### **Management Considerations**

The possibilities exist that molds and toxins could develop if the sprouted grain is stored at moisture levels conducive to spoilage. Moisture level of sprouted grain should be tested before placing it in storage. If visible molds are present, a sample should be taken and sent to the Diagnostic Laboratory for mycotoxin analysis, prior to feeding. This is especially important if the moldy grain will be fed to young or gestating livestock.