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Face Management of Silos Critical for Consistent Silage Quality and Minimizing Losses

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Silage research shows that poor face management of silos can easily double dry matter losses in the silo. This means if a bunker silo has 15% shrink during normal fermentation, another 15% loss can occur at feedout, resulting in a 30% dry matter loss. Besides the financial loss of silage due to aerobic instability, the quality and consistency of the feed delivered to dairy cattle will vary dramatically. This may account for health and production problems that may occur in the dairy herd. Thumb-rules of good silo face management include:

- Feed off a minimum 6 inches across the entire face daily and keep the face clean.
- Remove and dispose visible moldy crust from silo surface when pulling back tarp
- Do not allow loose silage to lie in front of the silo until next feeding.
- Do not remove silage and store on a feed pad for 1-2 days before feeding.

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