



## Silage efficiency

**M**AXIMISING the efficiency of silage making is always important, but this year where conserved forage stocks are low, or grass growth is compromised, it's critical to make the most of this input to the feed programme.

Reducing ensiling losses and improving the nutritional quality of silage will give you more silage with greater milk producing potential, which is a real bonus in a difficult year.

Using a proven silage inoculant is one of the key tools, along with good compaction and sealing, for both reducing losses and improving the nutritional quality of silage. An inoculant which supplies high numbers of lactic acid bacteria along with enzymes will produce large amounts of lactic acid, even when crop sugar levels are low, resulting in a rapid drop in pH to around 4. This fast pH drop leaves little time for spoilage organisms and plant enzymes, which are active above a pH of around 5, to burn sugars and break down valuable proteins.

The result is that more dry matter (DM) is preserved rather than broken down to ammonia and carbon dioxide which are lost to the atmosphere, and the silage contains more sugars and quality protein. Trials with some inoculants, such as Sil-All4x4®, have shown DM losses reduced by at least 5 per cent and improved protein quality. The improvement in nutritional quality results in increased milk production in trials comparing cows on inoculated silage to cows on untreated silage, and greater live-weight gain in trials with beef cattle.

At this point you may be wondering whether the improvements seen with a proven inoculant cover the cost, particularly with fluctuating milk prices. Controlled trials comparing silage treated with Sil-All4x4® to untreated silage have shown an improvement in dry matter preservation and silage digestibility equating to an extra \$15 to \$34 of milk per wet tonne of silage at 35 per cent DM. At the lowest level, this gives a payback of \$5 for every \$1 spent on Sil-All4x4®, even at a low predicted payout of \$6/kg milk solids (MS).

For those fattening beef cattle, trials have shown a potential payback of between 2 and 5 to 1 based on a schedule of \$2 per kg liveweight.

With greater emphasis on production from home grown feeds this year, it really makes sense to take advantage of the best inoculant technology to increase the amount of forage you conserve and the nutritional quality of your silage.

For more information on Sil-All4x4® silage inoculant, contact Alltech NZ on 0800 MAKE SILAGE.



Versatile cover and shelter for farm assets by Cover Systems. Stock sizes of 5 to 20m are available, with bespoke designs up to 300m in length available on request. The company has a showroom in Mt Eden, Auckland.

# Ensure your assets are well protected from the elements

**I**T'S well understood how much a farm's assets mean to the farmer, so it's no surprise that it's an ongoing priority to protect them. Here in New Zealand the weather can be our friend as well as our enemy and productivity can suffer as a result of a weather-stressed herd, poor condition of feed or machinery, or damaged stores. So versatile, reliable and affordable cover and shelter for key farm assets is essential to good farm management.

As costs associated with building and maintaining permanent structures have fluctuated unpredictably over recent years, Cover Systems International's high quality, re-locatable structures are in demand. Their shelters and covers are suitable for uses ranging between calf and lamb shelters, grain storage and vehicle and machinery shelters.

"What we've found farmers really like about our shelters and covers is that they are 100 per cent weather-tight, they're easily relocatable and are available for use quickly. The replacement

cost of the PVC membrane over a typical 10-year life span is only 35 per cent of the cost of the shed itself, so our shelters offer significant cost savings over permanent buildings. They also don't require time-consuming and expensive consents," said director Sam Paterson.

"In designing our shelters we place great emphasis on quality, innovation and reliability, and features such as domed roofs to withstand high winds of up to 150 kph and heavy snow loads; unique but easy-to-erect steel wire cross-bracing frame systems for strength, state-of-the-art membranes for ultimate weather protection, and good light opacity for livestock and work conditions are extremely important to our customers," said Mr Paterson.

Auckland's Mt Eden-based Cover Systems International specialises in supplying innovative, high quality cover and shelter systems to industries as diverse as marine, construction and agriculture and all their products carry lengthy warranties.

Shelter designs vary but common construction features include: sturdy, powder-coated or galvanized box or tube steel framing; membranes are high-grade PVC used in truck curtains/sides, performing well in UV up to 8-10 years; secure ratchet tie-downs to fasten the membrane tight; and fixed, slide or curtain doors for easy access.

The structures are shipped in handy crates, complete with easy assembly instructions. Stock sizes of 5 to 20m are available, but bespoke designs and sizes up to 300m in length are also available on request. An installation service is also available if needed.

Cover Systems' showroom is at 2 Akepiro Street, Mount Eden, Auckland, and a representative can visit you onsite to discuss your requirements and give advice on what option may be best for you. Dealers for retail products in New Zealand and Australia can be located online at [www.coversystems.co.nz](http://www.coversystems.co.nz). For enquiries phone 09 630 5331.

## AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE PROTECTION FOR YOUR FARM ASSETS

Double Garage

Implement Shed

Tractor Shed

Container Shed

Livestock Shelter

Hay Barn

- Easy to assemble and relocatable
- No consents required
- 100% Weather-tight & UV stabilised fabrics
- Built tough for NZ conditions
- Pre-made sizes or made to order
- Contact us for a free consultation

**COVER SYSTEMS**  
International

Prices from **ONLY \$999!** Contact us **NOW** quoting "SFOCT" for details on our **FREE Boat or Vehicle Offer** Valid October 2010

[www.coversystems.co.nz](http://www.coversystems.co.nz)  
Phone 09 630 5331