



Flood Waters, Mold Pose Risks This Fall for Livestock Feed

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MADISON – State agriculture officials are warning livestock producers and feed mills to be alert to the risks of flood water contamination and mold in corn, soybeans and forage crops.

These risks threaten both human and animal health, they say.

Flood waters may contain sewage, bacteria and other pathogens, pesticides, chemical wastes, and other toxins that contaminate field crops and stored feed and may sicken animals that consume them. Mold growth is often a problem, both in and outside of flooded areas, in a wet humid season like much of Wisconsin experienced this year.

“Mycotoxins produced by some molds may sicken animals that consume moldy feed, and could also sicken people who consume milk or meat from those animals,” says Acting State Veterinarian Dr. Darlene Konkle.

“We’ve sent our environmental specialists to check feed mills in flooded areas of the state to check whether feed products or ingredients may have come in contact with flood waters,” notes feed program manager Heather Bartley of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. “Producers who store ingredients at elevators or feed mills until they need it for on-farm mixing should be aware of the flood status of those businesses and the possibility of mycotoxins.”

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has posted information about harvesting crops for producers in flooded areas on its website. The agency advises testing crops exposed to flood waters for mycotoxins, heavy metals, bacterial pathogens and chemicals, especially organophosphate and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides. Depending on the test results, it may be possible to recondition the crop for use as animal feed.

Any feed ingredients or feed showing signs of mold should also be tested for mycotoxins, including aflatoxin, which may be a carcinogen.

For more information, visit

<https://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/ResourcesforYou/ucm575263.htm>.

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