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WATER-DAMAGED FEED CONSIDERATIONS

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Mixed feeds, grains and roughages which have undergone spontaneous heating or have become spoiled have little feeding value for livestock. The actual nutritive value of feed will depend on the extent of damage. Feeds which have heated or become badly molded or soured should not be fed to any livestock. Wet feeds should be spread out and dried as quickly as possible. The dried feeds then could be fed in limited amounts to cattle if damage is not extreme. Do not feed moldy legume hays such as alfalfa and clover to any livestock.

Horses and sheep are highly susceptible to moldy feeds of any kind and death losses may occur. Moldy feeds should not be fed to swine or to pregnant cattle. Cattle are less likely to be affected by moldy feeds, but be cautious of the amount fed. Extreme caution should be used in feeding moldy protein concentrates. Other moldy feeds might be fed when mixed with as much as 75 percent sound feeds. The beginning mix should consist of no more than 5 to 10 percent of the spoiled feed. Beef cattle on full feed in feedlots may be thrown off feed. Cattle on pasture will consume some of these feeds after they are dried. Dairymen are cautioned about feeding mold damaged feed to producing cows because it is less palatable and will lower milk production. Such feed mixtures as described for beef cattle could be fed to young dairy stock.

Feeds spoiled by hurricane or flood waters may carry harmful organisms which could cause death. Feeds spoiled from simply getting wet from rain would be less likely to contain such organisms. The inhaling of excessive amounts of mold spores may cause certain respiratory and nervous disorders.

Some diseases are spread by water. Any feeds which have been damaged by flood water may be contaminated, even when dried. Watch for signs such as nervousness, listlessness, going off feed and general unthriftiness. If they are observed, contact a veterinarian.

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